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'ATROCIOUS ATTACK'

Trump condemns alleged use of chemical weapons in Syria, says he'll decide response within 48 hours

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■ Israel blamed for missile strike on Syrian air base that reportedly killed 14 **Page 3**

A rescue worker carries a child following a suspected gas attack in the rebel-held town of Douma, near Damascus, Syria, on Sunday.

COURTESY OF SYRIAN CIVIL DEFENSE WHITE HELMETS/AP

US: N. Korean leader ready to discuss nuclear weapons

By JOSH LEDERMAN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — North Korea's government has communicated with the United States to say that leader Kim Jong Un is ready to discuss his nuclear weapons program with President Donald Trump, officials said Sunday, increasing the likelihood that the unprecedented summit

will actually occur.

The confirmation from Pyongyang directly, rather than from third countries like South Korea, has created more confidence within Trump's administration about the wisdom of holding such a meeting, as U.S. officials make secretive preparations. The Trump administration has long said that if the North Koreans weren't ready to discuss giving up their nuclear program,

there was no reason for the two countries to hold negotiations.

Trump took his own administration and other countries by surprise last month when he accepted an unusual offer from Kim to hold a meeting. The North had conveyed the invitation to a visiting delegation from South Korea, which in turn traveled to Washington and relayed the

message to Trump.

The president said yes to the meeting on the spot, even though the U.S. had not heard directly from North Korea about Kim's intentions. The U.S. later heard from other countries including China, where Kim paid a rare visit, that the North was serious about the offer.

SEE NUKES ON PAGE 7

Navy investigates after Bible included in display

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MIDEAST

Trump: Syria decision to come within 48 hours



SYRIAN CIVIL DEFENSE WHITE HELMETS/AP

This image made from video and authenticated based on its contents and other Associated Press reporting shows a medical worker giving a toddler oxygen through a respirator Sunday following a suspected poison gas attack in Douma, in eastern Ghouta near Damascus, Syria.

Israel blamed for missile strike in Syria; 14 are reported dead

By ZEINA KARAM
AND BASSEM MKROUE
Associated Press

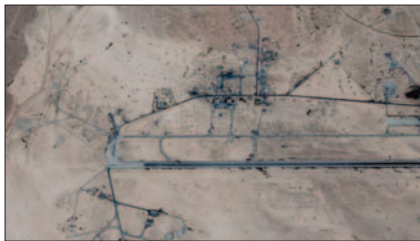
BEIRUT — Russia and the Syrian military blamed Israel for a pre-dawn missile attack Monday on a Syrian air base that reportedly killed 14 people, including three Iranians, while international condemnation grew over a suspected poison gas attack during the weekend that was said to be carried out by the Syrian government.

Opposition activists said 40 people died in the chemical attack, blaming President Bashar Assad's forces. The U.N. Security Council planned to hold an emergency meeting Monday to discuss the chemical attack.

The timing of the strike on the air base in the central Homs province, hours after President Donald Trump said there would be "a big price to pay" for the chemical weapons attack, raised questions about whether Israel was acting alone or as a proxy for the U.S. Israel typically does not comment on its airstrikes in Syria.

It was the second such attack this year on the air base, known as T4, where Iranian fighters are believed to be stationed.

Russia's Defense Ministry said two Israeli aircraft targeted the T4 air base, firing eight missiles. It said Syria shot down five of them while the other three landed in the western part of the base. Syrian state TV quoted an unnamed military official as saying that Israeli F-15 warplanes fired several missiles at T4. It gave no



Google

T4's Military Airbase, also known as the T-4 air base, is located in the Homs Governorate, north of Tiys and west of the ancient city of Palmyra, Syria.

further details.

Israel's Foreign Ministry had no comment when asked about reports of the airstrikes.

Since 2012, Israel has struck inside Syria more than 100 times, mostly targeting suspected weapons convoys destined for the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, which has been fighting alongside Syrian government forces.

Saturday's suspected gas attack took place in the town of Douma, the last remaining rebel bastion in the eastern suburbs of Damascus. It killed entire families in their homes and underground shelters, opposition activists and local rescuers said.

Syria's state news agency, SANA, initially said the attack on the T4 air base likely was "an American aggression," but the Pentagon denied involvement and

the agency then dropped the accusation, blaming Israel instead. SANA said the missile attack resulted in a number of casualties, but provided no specific figures.

Iran's semi-official Fars news agency identified three Iranians it said were among those killed. It did not provide their ranks or further information.

The Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, which monitors the war through a network of activists on the ground, said 14 died, including Iranians and three Syrian officers.

Rami Abdulrahman, the Observatory's chief, said the assault targeted a mobile air defense unit and some buildings inside the air base. He said it also hit posts outside the base used by the Iranians and Iran-backed fighters.

From wire reports

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump on Monday said that he will make a "major decision" on a response to a suspected chemical weapon attack in Syria that killed scores of people — "a barbaric act," he called it — over the next 24 to 48 hours.

"It was an atrocious attack. It was horrible," Trump said of the Saturday strike which killed at least 40 people, including children. He told reporters in the Oval Office that "this is about humanity, and it can't be allowed to happen."

A Navy destroyer, the USS Donald Cook, was underway in the eastern Mediterranean on Monday after completing a port call at Larnaca, Cyprus. The ship is armed with Tomahawk cruise missiles, the weapon of choice in a U.S. attack one year ago on an airfield in Syria after a suspected sarin gas attack on civilians at Khan Sheikhoun. The U.S. said the 2017 strike was intended to deter Syria from further use of chemical weapons.

Trump was to meet later Monday with senior national security aides. "Nothing's off the table," he said after condemning Saturday's suspected use of toxic gas. "It was an atrocious attack," he said. "It was horrible."

"If it's the Russians, if it's Syria, if it's Iran, if it's all of them together, we'll figure it out," Trump said.

Trump's warning seemed to conflict with his frequent criticism of his predecessors, chiefly former President Barack Obama, for telegraphing potential military strikes and thus losing the element of surprise. A punitive strike also would put the U.S. in conflict with the Russia-backed Syrian government, whereas Trump has insisted that the only U.S. role in Syria is to crush Islamic State — a mission he hopes to complete soon.

By his latest statements, Trump has raised the pressure to act militarily. After an earlier chemical attack a year ago, he ordered a limited strike against a Syrian airfield. As a candidate and president, he often condemned Obama for drawing a "red line" suggesting Syria's use of chemical weapons would invite retaliation and then failing to follow up.

Trump planned to meet with his senior military advisers Monday evening at the White House. The deliberations came as Russia and the Syrian military blamed Israel for a pre-dawn missile attack on a major air base in central Syria, saying Israeli fighter jets launched missiles from Lebanon's airspace. A group that monitors Syria's civil war said the airstrikes killed 14 people, including Iranians active in Syria.

Saturday's suspected poison gas attack took place in a rebel-held town near Damascus amid a resumed offensive by Syrian government forces after the collapse of a truce.

Syrian activists, rescuers and medics said the attack in Douma

killed at least 40 people, with families found suffocated in their houses and shelters. The reports could not immediately be independently verified.

Officials in Washington worked Sunday to verify the claim by Syrian opposition activists and rescuers that the Assad government was responsible.

Just over a year ago, Trump ordered dozens of cruise missiles to be fired at a Syrian air base after declaring there was no doubt Syrian President Bashar Assad had "choked out the lives of helpless" civilians in an attack that used banned gases. White House advisers said at the time that images of hurt children helped spur the president to launch that airstrike, and television news shows on Sunday aired similar depictions of suffering young Syrians.

"Many dead, including women and children, in mindless CHEMICAL attack in Syria," Trump tweeted. "Area of atrocity is in lockdown and encircled by Syrian Army making it completely inaccessible to outside world. President Putin, Russia and Iran are responsible for backing Animal Assad. Big price to pay. Open area immediately for medical help and verification. Another humanitarian disaster for no reason whatsoever. SICK!"

The developments came as Trump has moved to dramatically scale back U.S. goals in Syria, pushing for a quick military withdrawal despite resistance from many of his national security advisers. Trump has given no formal order to pull out the 2,000 U.S. troops in Syria or offered a public timetable other than to say the U.S. will withdraw as soon as the remaining ISIS fighters can be vanquished.

But Trump has signaled to his advisers that ideally, he wants all troops out within six months.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said Assad heard Trump's signal that he wanted to withdraw from Syria and, "emboldened by American inaction," launched the attack. In a statement, McCain said Trump "responded decisively" last year with the airstrike and urged Trump to be forceful again to "demonstrate that Assad will pay a price for his war crimes."

Images released by the Syrian Civil Defense White Helmets, a volunteer organization, show children lying on the ground motionless and foaming at the mouth. The Assad government, in a statement posted on the state-run news agency SANA, denied responsibility.

Trump's homeland security adviser, Thomas Bossert, noted on ABC's "This Week" the timing of the suspected chemical attack — almost a year to the day of the U.S. missile strikes.

Asked about the potential for an American missile strike in response, Bossert said: "I wouldn't take anything off the table. These are horrible photos. We're looking into the attack at this point."

MILITARY

Army identifies pilots killed in helicopter crash

By COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Army pilots killed Friday when their AH-64E Apache helicopter crashed in Kentucky were a 17-year veteran of the service and a Marine-turned-Army aviator, according to military officials.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Ryan Connolly and Warrant Officer James Casadona were on a training flight at Fort Campbell when they crashed, the fifth in a series of military aviation wrecks last week that left seven servicemembers dead. Fort Campbell officials said the wreck Friday was under investigation but declined to provide details about how or why it occurred.

Both pilots were assigned to the 101st Combat Aviation Brigade at Fort Campbell. Casadona, 28, had joined the unit in recent months after completing training in January at Fort Rucker in Alabama. He had joined the Army in 2012, according to a Fort Campbell spokesman. The pilot had served four years in the Marines after graduating from the New Hampton School in New

Hampton, N.H., where he played soccer, according to the high school.

Casadona's three sisters — Kristen and Nicole Casadona and Lauren Dean — posted photos of their fallen brother in public tributes to him on their Facebook pages.

In a post that included a photograph of Kristen Casadona with her brother, who went by Jimmy, with an Apache in the background, she wrote he was her "best friend, confident and adventure partner."

"I love you with all of my heart and every ounce of my being," Kristen wrote. "... Golden Boy and Glamour Girl forever and ever, but for now taking each day one step at a time. Fly high and fly free, my sweet brother. There was no one in this world quite like you, Jimmy."

On her page, Dean wrote simply: "My heart is shattered."



Casadona



Connolly

Connolly, 37, of Manchester, Mo., was a veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan since joining the service in 2001, according to the Army. He was an instructor pilot who had been assigned to Fort Campbell since 2016.

A friend of Connolly's, Robert James Crandall, wrote in a public Facebook post on Sunday that Connolly was a "great man."

Connolly left college early in 2001 at the University of Missouri to enlist in the Army because he was called to service, wrote Crandall, himself a Navy veteran who roomed with Connolly in college, where they were members of the fraternity Pi Kappa Alpha.

"I will miss him dearly and I will think of him always as the great man, friend, and brother he was to me and to everyone who had ever had the honor of knowing him," Crandall wrote. "Thank you for all the

memories Ryan. I know you made the most of ... life, this world, and you are with God! Our country has lost a great soldier."

In addition to Connolly and Casadona, four Marines were killed last week when their CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter crashed in Southern California, and an elite Air Force Thunderbirds F-16 pilot died in a training wreck in Nevada. In Djibouti, another CH-53E helicopter sustained damage in a crash, and an AV-8B Harrier attack jet was destroyed in another crash last week.

Pentagon officials said they were investigating all the crashes and looking for possible links in the uptick in training mishaps, but Lt. Gen. Kenneth McKenzie, the director of the Joint Staff, said the Defense Department did not have immediate reason to believe they were related.

"We look very hard, through a well-established procedure of examining each mishap," he said. "We work very hard to uncover all those things, to look both individually at each accident, each mishap, as well as the linkages between them."

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Djibouti aiming to be global military, shipping center

By ELIAS MESERRET

Associated Press

DJIBOUTI — Two fighter jets took off and roared over the Djibouti-Ambouli International Airport, a sprawling complex in this tiny African nation that is quickly becoming a strategic military and shipping outpost for the world.

Not far away, a massive U.S. flag waved over transport planes parked in front of America's only permanent military base in Africa, Camp Lemonnier, home to about 4,000 personnel.

Djibouti, an arid Horn of Africa nation with fewer than 1 million inhabitants, also has become a military outpost for China, France, Italy and Japan, with that nation's first overseas base since World War II. Other powers including Saudi Arabia have expressed interest in the key location across the Bab el-Mandeb strait from the Arabian Peninsula and on one of the world's busiest shipping corridors.

On the chaotic streets of what has been called the "Singapore of Africa," the jostling between the United States and China for influence is plainly seen.

Before his firing by President Donald Trump, then-Secretary of State Rex Tillerson made a point of stopping in Djibouti on his Africa visit last month, noting its importance in the fight against the al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab extremist group in neighboring Somalia and Islamic State in the region at large.

The U.S. carries out drone missions in Somalia and Yemen from Djibouti, but the military paused air operations last week after a

jet crashed and a helicopter was damaged during a landing. U.S. military aircraft were cleared to resume flights Saturday, U.S. Africa Command said.

China's first overseas military base, which was manned last year, is just a few miles from the U.S. base. The head of U.S. Africa Command, Gen. Thomas Waldhauser, earlier this year predicted that "there will be more."

China's economic interest is strong as well, with Djibouti borrowing up to \$87 million from the Export-Import Bank of China to finance several projects in recent years, according to the China Africa Research Initiative at Johns Hopkins University. The Chinese built a new electrified rail line that links the capital of neighboring Ethiopia, Africa's second-most populous country and one of its strongest economies, with Djibouti as the nation aims to become a global shipping power.

"We sit on two of the busiest shipping lanes in the world. We are servicing the wider region, including some of the world's fastest-growing economies," the chairman of the Djibouti Ports and Free Zones Authority, Aboubaker Omar Hadi, said in an interview during a recent visit by The Associated Press.

He called Djibouti, a largely Muslim nation, a model of stability in an otherwise volatile region. It is also one of the world's fastest-growing economies, with the World Bank projecting 7 percent growth this year.

The country made headlines earlier this year when it seized control of a container terminal run by the Dubai-based DP World, one of



ELIAS MESERRET/AP

Djibouti is investing \$15 billion in local infrastructure projects that connect the region to global trade routes, according to official figures provided to The Associated Press.

the world's largest port operators, in a long-running legal dispute. If China takes over the terminal's operations, the effects on supplying the U.S. military base could be "significant," the U.S. Africa Command chief has warned.

That will not happen, Hadi's office said. "Djibouti has no plan to give Doraleh Container Port to China," it said. It is now managed by a fully state-owned company controlled by the ports authority, it added.

Djibouti is currently investing \$15 billion in local infrastructure projects that connect the region to global trade routes, including the expansion of ports, improved road and rail links and new airports, according to official figures provided to the AP.

The country's ports now have a total handling capacity of 18 million tons per year, officials said, and the new Doraleh Multipurpose Port, a \$590 million joint project between the ports authority and China Merchants Port Holdings opened in May last year, is already working at full capacity. It is a separate entity

from the Doraleh Container Port.

Now officials are pursuing a new project called the Djibouti International Free Trade Zone, expected to be the largest of its kind in Africa.

"Once complete it will span an area of 4,800 hectares (11,860 acres), following a total investment of more than \$3.5 billion," the ports authority chairman said. The first phase is expected to be complete by the end of the year.

Officials hope the ambitious infrastructure projects will not only raise Djibouti's global image but also help it pay off significant debts.

During Tillerson's visit, Foreign Minister Mahamoud Ali Youssouf acknowledged that Djibouti's debt totals roughly 84 percent of its GDP, most of it to China. "The burden of debt is there; we are aware of it," he said. "But let me tell you that it is so far manageable."

One sign of investor confidence is whether China's commercial banks begin lending to Djibouti as well, said Jyhyong Hwang, senior research assistant at the China-Africa Research Initiative.

Djibouti's officials anticipate that the demand for their ports will grow as more African nations expand their economies.

They also dismissed concerns about a recent deal by DP World, Ethiopia and Somalia's semi-autonomous region of Somaliland to develop and manage the Port of Berbera there, seen by some as another reason for Djibouti's seizure of the container terminal from DP World.

"Competition will make the region more attractive. East Africa's economies are growing fast, and there is a clear demand for Djibouti's infrastructure to support this growth," the ports authority chairman said.

Djibouti's residents said local business is booming as a result of the growing international military and shipping interest, despite the country's unemployment rate of nearly 40 percent, and construction sites and new roads dotted the city.

Economic growth has attracted entrepreneurs from India, Yemen, Gulf nations and elsewhere.

MILITARY

‘Our duty is to deliver on your sacrifice’

Resilience of wounded warfighters lauded in return visit to Afghanistan

By PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — Justin Lane recalls being “blown up three separate times” while clearing U.S. military routes from improvised explosive devices in Afghanistan in 2010 and 2011.

The third blast penetrated the Army specialist’s armored vehicle and took off both of his legs, severing the middle finger on his right hand and his spine from his pelvic bone.

“So they had to cut me down my perfectly chiseled abs and do 28 surgeries to put me back together,” Lane, now retired, told a crowd at NATO’s Resolute Support Headquarters.

It was the final event of a tour of Afghanistan that he and six other wounded American warfighters made over several days as part of operation Proper Exit.

The initiative, organized by Feherly’s Troops First Foundation, brings post-9/11 combat veterans and families of fallen service-members to theater to get closure from their experiences and to exchange stories with troops currently deployed.

Retired Army Staff Sgt. John Hosea, whose platoon vehicle struck a 500-pound IED near the border with Pakistan in 2012, was “dead for about 27 minutes” before medics brought him back to life.

“We’ve all overcome a bunch of things ... now we’re giving it back and trying to help all those out there and all those people who helped us: the nurses, the doctors. So that’s why we’re back here,” said Hosea, who now has a titanium rod for a femur. “The whole point of this is to come back and get our closure.”

Since 2009, more than 50 wounded servicemembers have returned to Afghanistan on operation Proper Exit trips.

Speaking to the crowd of coalition forces and contractors on Saturday, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Army Gen. John Nicholson, thanked the seven returnees, calling them heroes.

“Our duty is to deliver on your sacrifice,” Nicholson said. “This fight against terror is the most important fight in the world. The costs of failure are unimaginable.

“Know that each of you are an inspiration to all of us and the way that you are connecting with individuals, with units, with people here is going to have a lasting impact on this mission and everyone here,” he said.

Nicholson went on to commend several Afghan soldiers who were wounded in action and who attended the ceremony.

Roughly 15,000 U.S. troops are currently deployed to Afghanistan. New rules allowing troops to embed with Afghans on the front lines have raised concerns that American casualties could rise in the months ahead.

More than 2,400 U.S. service-members have been killed here since the war began in 2001. More than 20,000 have been wounded. Nearly 1,140 other coalition troops have also died in the war.

Two men who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder were among the seven who took part in the Proper Exit visit, which ended Sunday.

Retired Army Staff Sgt. Jaymes Poling — who was deployed to Afghanistan three times and engaged in several firefights — writes about veterans’ issues and helped establish a nonprofit organization that works to create dialogue between civilian and military communities.

“If we look at society we kind of see veterans portrayed in three different ways: They’re either portrayed as liabilities or as dam-



PHOTOS BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN/Stars and Stripes

Retired Army Spc. Justin Lane, who lost both legs in combat in 2011, arrives at an operation Proper Exit event at NATO’s Resolute Support Headquarters in Kabul, Afghanistan, on Saturday.

aged in some way or as heroes, and it’s easy for a lot of us to sit there and say, ‘OK we’re not this hero, so are we damaged or are we in this liability group?’” Poling said.

“If we can look at someone who survives cancer and say, ‘This person’s stronger now,’ then we can look at someone who survives combat and deals with the stress related to it and say, ‘This person has the opportunity to be stronger now also,’” he added.

A fellow PTSD sufferer, Navy Cmdr. William Danchanko, is a doctor and a nurse practitioner. He was deployed to Kandahar Air Field in 2010, where he worked in the trauma center, where he said he treated 6,000 wounded people in less than 200 days.

“It took a toll. I don’t think I was really wired for that,” Danchanko said.

He said returning to Afghan-



Gen. John Nicholson, right, the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, greets Navy Cmdr. William Danchanko during the Proper Exit ceremony.

stan helped him.

“The last time I saw people like this, they were laying on a gurney and I was trying to figure out how

to make them not die,” he said. “I got a happy ending finally.”

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Wounded Afghan troops attend the ceremony.



From left: Danchanko, retired Army Staff Sgt. John Hosea, retired Army Staff Sgt. Jaymes Poling, retired Army Sgt. Franz Walkup, retired Marine Corps Sgt. Hubert Gonzalez, Army Sgt. Jonathan Harmon and Lane participate in the ceremony.

MILITARY

German resort data breach exposes US troops to ID theft

By MARTIN EGNASH
Stars and Stripes

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany — The Armed Forces Recreation Center Edelweiss Lodge and Resort is investigating a data breach that left some guests open to identity theft.

At least 18 guests — primarily soldiers and retirees — who stayed at the resort between November 2017 and February 2018 reported that their credit cards were misused after their stays.

The data breach, which was caused by a malicious program at one of the resort's work stations, seems to be limited to credit card

information.

The recreation center, located at the foot of the German Alps, is working with the Army Criminal Investigation Command to investigate the incident and is taking steps to safeguard guest information, said Scott Malcom, spokesman for the Army Installation Management Command.

The resort has emailed all guests who stayed during the suspect time period to notify them of the situation "and guide them through steps they can take to protect their credit card security and privacy," he said.

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Air Force moving to address problems with F-35 spare parts

By JIM THOMPSON
Northwest (For Waller Beach)
Florida Daily News

EGLIN AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. — The Air Force is taking a three-pronged approach to addressing spare-parts issues threatening the F-35 stealth fighter jet program at Eglin Air Force Base and elsewhere, according to its Air Education and Training Command.

Last month, U.S. Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., whose district includes Eglin, said problems with acquiring spare parts and repairing parts for the F-35 could seriously compromise the base's role in training pilots for the next-generation fighter jet.

"While we've not been late in graduating any pilots yet, I've been told that we are rapidly approaching the inability to accomplish the mission," Gaetz said.

Questions posed at various levels of Air Force command following Gaetz's comment went unanswered until a few days ago. The deputy director of public affairs at AETC, which has broad responsibilities for training across the Air Force, responded via email late last week to questions initially posed by Eglin's public affairs office.

Lt. Col. Tracy Bunko stressed that the "supply challenges do not pose any safety concerns for our aircraft, which are always maintained and operated within applicable USAF guidance and policies."

Bunko said that AETC is working with Air Force Materiel Command and the F-35 Joint Program Office "to accurately assess the supply impacts and establish a way forward."

The Materiel Command provides acquisition management services and logistical support

to the Air Force. The Joint Program Office manages the F-35 program for the Air Force, the Navy and the Marine Corps, the U.S. military services that will be using the F-35.

According to a recent report in Defense News, the Department of Defense is considering moving F-35 management from the joint office to offices within each of the services using the aircraft.

Among the strategies for dealing with spare parts and repair issues with the F-35 is increasing the pace of establishing "organic depot repair capabilities," Bunko said. "Organic" repair facilities are facilities operated by the military, as opposed to the current situation, in which the DOD has had to rely on contractors to address spare-parts and repair issues.

That developing approach will "improve spares availability and reduce repair costs," Bunko said.

Also, according to the email, the F-35 program has established an initiative "to actively address spares demand by exploring alternative replacement technologies and parts." The email did not specify what sorts of alternatives would be explored, and Friday calls to the AETC were not returned immediately.

Bunko went on to note that the F-35 program has been taking steps to address some of its spare-parts issues for at least the past two years. In that time, she said, \$2.1 billion has been spent to address what her email called "urgently needed spares" for three versions of electronic warfare hardware and software in the aircraft.

The Air Force is the single largest customer for the F-35. In all, the Air Force plans to buy nearly 1,800 F-35s, with the Navy and the Marine Corps slated to purchase nearly 700 F-35s.



CHRISTOPHER KLUTTS/Courtesy of the U.S. Army

A U.S. Army Special Forces weapons sergeant observes a Nigerian army soldier during marksmanship training as part of Exercise Flintlock 2017 in Diffa, Niger, in February 2017.

US special ops, partners launch war games in Niger

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

STUTTGART, Germany — U.S. special operations forces kicked off their largest exercise in Africa on Monday in Niger, a country that is at the center of a growing counterterrorism mission.

The focus of the two-week Flintlock 2018, which involves eight African and 12 western countries, is the day-to-day threats faced by local forces on the ground, the top U.S. commander of special operations troops in Africa told reporters before the exercise.

"The scenarios will be based on real-world threats of the violent extremist organizations currently threatening our partner nations in the greater Sahel," a belt of territory between the Sahara Desert and the Sudanian Savanna, said Maj. Gen. J. Marcus Hicks, head of Special Operations Command Africa.

The emphasis has shifted from a focus on tactical proficiency of small units to the command and control of joint forces, he said.

Niger has emerged as a hub for U.S. operations in the region. A new drone site is being developed in the central Niger city of Agadez, where a Nigerian military base will play a key role in this year's exercises.

A joint multinational headquarters for Flintlock will be set up in Agadez, where military teams will conduct command and control over tactical units spread out in Niger, Senegal and Burkina Faso. Those countries, along with Chad, Mali and Mauritania, are part of a joint regional response force involved in regional counterterrorism.

West Africa is home to numerous extremist groups, such as Nigeria-based Boko Haram, Islamic State and various al-Qaida-aligned organizations. ISIS and al-Qaida affiliates are descending through central Mali, threatening not only Mali but also Burkina Faso and Niger, Hicks said.

In October, four U.S. soldiers were killed in western Niger in an ambush while on patrol with

Nigerien forces. The incident has brought increased scrutiny to U.S. efforts in Niger and has raised questions about whether American troops are taking on unnecessary risks to counter what is still a regional threat. So far, jihadis in Western Africa have not demonstrated a capacity to strike the U.S. directly.

Niger is an isolated, landlocked country that is among the world's poorest. The government is struggling with persistent food shortages as the population is set to double in 18 years. The concern is that fragile countries like Niger could become vulnerable to extremist groups looking for potential havens.

"Africa matters to us because it is a preventive medicine theater versus an emergency medicine theater," Hicks said. "What I mean by that is that these threats, as they exist in Africa, are at a level where they can be dealt with ... at a very low cost."

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No injuries reported in Osan Air Base fire

Stars and Stripes

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — No injuries were reported after a blaze broke out Monday at the home of the 7th Air Force in South Korea.

The fire began about 8 a.m. at a hospital expansion construction site and was contained within an hour, said 51st Fighter Wing

spokesman Tech. Sgt. Benjamin Wiseman.

Local residents reported hearing a loud noise when the fire started at the base about 30 miles south of Seoul. Services on the main road next to the hospital were halted temporarily. The 51st Medical Group ended a temporary evacuation at 10 a.m., ac-

cording to its Facebook page.

Wiseman said the cause of the fire is under investigation.

Along with the headquarters for the Air Force on the peninsula, the base is home to F-16s, A-10s, U-2 spy planes and the headquarters for the Army's 35th Air Defense Artillery brigade.

news@stripes.com

NATION

Nukes: Questions surround US-North Korea summit

FROM FRONT PAGE

Still, North Korea's government has not said anything publicly at all about a meeting with Trump, and the lack of known contact between Pyongyang and Washington about the meeting has fueled further speculation about the seriousness of Kim's offer.

A Trump administration official on Sunday said that the U.S. had "confirmed that Kim Jong Un is willing to discuss the de-

nuclearization of the Korean Peninsula." A second official said that confirmation had come through direct contact between American and North Korean officials.

Neither official would say when or how the contact took place or in what location. The officials weren't authorized to comment by name and demanded anonymity.

Previously, former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson had said there were at least

two or three channels through which U.S. and North Korean officials communicate from time to time.

The Trump administration has not said where the meeting will take place or whether a location has been determined, nor has an exact date been set. Initially, the White House said it expected the meeting to take place by the end of May. It's unclear whether a date that early could be achieved

or whether it might be delayed.

The contacts between Pyongyang and Washington come as Trump's new national security adviser, former U.N. Ambassador John Bolton, prepared to start work at the White House on Monday. Prior to being named to the post, Bolton had long expressed hawkish views about North Korea, even advocating a pre-emptive military strike.

Trump seeks to ease fears of trade fight with China

BY JONATHAN LEMIRE
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Investors across the globe are bracing for uncertain markets as President Donald Trump tries to downplay fears of a trade dispute between the U.S. and China, suggesting Beijing will ease trade barriers "because it is the right thing to do" and that the economic superpowers can settle the conflict.

But as Trump tried to project confidence that a dispute that has rattled financial markets, consumers and businesses can be resolved soon, his top economic advisers offered mixed messages as to the best approach with China. Beijing has threatened to retaliate if Washington follows through with its proposed tariffs, even as Trump emphasized his bond with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

President Xi and I will always be friends, and I will always be friends, no matter what happens with our dispute on trade," Trump tweeted Sunday. "China will take down its Trade Barriers because it is the right thing to do. Taxes will become Reciprocal & a deal will be made on Intellectual Property. Great future for both countries!"

But Trump did not explain why, amid a week of economic saber-rattling between the two countries that shook global markets, he felt confident a deal could be made.

He also seemed to be mixing the trade imbalance with China's centerpiece of his presidential campaign, where he frequently used incendiary language to describe how Beijing would "rape" the U.S. economically. But even as Trump cozied up to Xi and pressed China for help derailing North Korea's

nuclear ambitions, he has ratcheted up the economic pressure and threatened tariffs, a move opposed by many fellow Republicans.

The Trump administration has said it is taking action as a crack-down on China's theft of U.S. intellectual property. The U.S. bought more than \$500 billion in goods from China last year and now is planning or considering penalizing on some \$150 billion of those imports. The U.S. sold about \$130 billion in goods to China in 2017 and faces a potentially devastating hit to its market there if China responds in kind.

China has pledged to "counter-attack with great strength" if Trump decided to follow through with his latest threat to impose tariffs on an additional \$100 billion in Chinese goods — after an earlier announcement that targeted \$50 billion. Beijing also declared the current rhetoric made negotiations impossible, even as the White House suggested the tariff talk was a way to spur China to the bargaining table.

The new White House economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, said Sunday that a "coalition of the willing" including Canada, much of Europe and Australia "has been formed to pressure China and that the U.S. would demand the World Trade Organization, an arbiter of trade disputes, be stricter on Beijing." And he said that although the U.S. has decided to suspend action, Trump "was not bluffing."

"This is a problem caused by China, not a problem caused by President Trump," Kudlow said on "Fox News Sunday."

But he also downplayed the tariff threat as "part of the process," suggesting on CNN that the impact



CHINATOPIC/AP

A container is loaded onto a cargo ship at a port in Qingdao in east China's Shandong province on Sunday. U.S. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin has said he does not expect a trade war between the U.S. and China despite mutual threats to impose tariffs.

would be "benign" and said he was hopeful China would enter negotiations. Kudlow, who started his job a week ago after his predecessor, Gary Cohn, quit over the tariff plan, brushed aside the possibility of economic repercussions.

"I don't think there's any trade war in sight," Kudlow told Fox. Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin said on CBS' "Face the Nation" he didn't expect the tariffs to have a "meaningful impact on the economy" even as he left the door open for disruption. He said there "could be" a trade war but said he didn't anticipate one.

Another top White House economic adviser, Peter Navarro, took a tougher tack, declaring that China's behavior was "a wakeup call to Americans."

"They are in competition with us over economic prosperity and national defense," Navarro said on

NBC's "Meet the Press." "Every day of the week China comes into our homes, our business and our government agencies. This country is losing its strength even as China has grown its economy."

Trump's latest proposal intensified what was already shaping up to be the biggest trade battle in more than a half-century.

Trump told advisers last week that he was unhappy with China's decision to tax \$50 billion in American products, including soybeans and small aircraft, in response to a U.S. move to impose tariffs on \$50 billion in Chinese goods. Rather than waiting weeks for the U.S. tariffs to be implemented, Trump backed a plan by Robert Lighthizer, his trade representative, to seek the enhanced tariffs.

The economic tensions pose a test to what has become Trump's frequent dual-track foreign policy

strategy: to establish close personal ties with another head of state even as his administration takes a harder line. The president has long talked up his friendship with Xi, whom he has praised for consolidating power in China despite its limits on democratic reforms.

Further escalation could be in the offing. The U.S. Treasury Department is working on plans to restrict Chinese technology investments in the U.S. And there is talk that the U.S. could also put limits on visas for Chinese who want to visit or study in this country.

For Trump, the dispute runs the risk of blunting the economic benefits of his tax overhaul, which is at the center of congressional Republicans' case for voters to keep them in power in the 2018 elections. China's retaliation so far has targeted Midwest farmers, many of whom supported Trump.

Stormy Daniels renews push for Trump to answer under oath

BY CATHERINE LUCEY
AND MIKE BALSAMO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A porn actress who says she had an affair with Donald Trump renewed an effort Sunday to get the president to answer her attorney's questions under oath.

An attorney for Stormy Daniels filed the motion in federal court in Los Angeles. Mi-

chael Avenatti is seeking a jury trial and wants sworn testimony from Trump and his personal lawyer, Michael Cohen, about a \$130,000 payment made to Daniels days before the 2016 presidential election as part of a nondisclosure agreement.

Trump answered questions about Daniels for the first time last week, saying he had no knowledge of the payment made by Cohen and adding that he didn't know where Cohen had gotten the money. The

White House has consistently said Trump denies the affair, and Cohen has held that he made the payment out of his own pocket.

Cohen did not immediately respond to a request seeking comment Sunday.

Avenatti filed a similar motion over a week ago, which a judge deemed premature. He refiled after Trump asked a federal judge to order private arbitration in the case. Trump and Cohen filed papers last

week asking a judge to rule that the case must be heard by an arbitrator instead of a jury. Avenatti opposes private arbitration.

In the filing, Avenatti says he wants to question Trump and Cohen for "no more than two hours." He says the depositions are needed to establish if Trump knew about the settlement agreement and if he "truly did not know about the \$130,000 payment." He also asks if Trump was involved in any effort to "silence" Daniels.

NATION

Teachers learning new skill: how to stop the bleeding

By SCOTT MCFETRIDE
Associated Press

PLEASANT HILL, Iowa — As she learned the basics of applying direct pressure, packing a wound with gauze and tying a tourniquet, sixth-grade math and social studies teacher Karl Stafford shook her head at the thought that this may now be an essential skill for her profession.

Stafford didn't like it, but with school shootings now a regular occurrence, she and her colleagues have reluctantly accepted that the attacks won't stop and that teachers must know how to keep the victims from bleeding to death.

"Learning to help and not just stand there is important," said Stafford, who joined about a dozen other educators at a medical training session at Southeast Polk High School in Pleasant Hill, Iowa.

Over the past five years, about 125,000 teachers, counselors and administrators across the country have been trained in stemming blood loss as school officials have become resigned to the grim trend. The effort is rapidly expanding, and more schools are now stocking classrooms with supplies that would be familiar to any military medic: lightweight tourniquets, gauze coated with blood-clotting drugs and compression bandages.

Although schools are adding security and even arming teachers to deter attacks, new emphasis is being given to saving the wounded.

The teacher triage idea was initially pushed by Dr. Lenworth Jacobs, of Hartford, Conn., who operated on victims of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting in 2012, in which 26 children and adults were killed.

He feared Sandy Hook wouldn't be the last school shooting, and his assumption has been borne out again and again, with the Feb. 14 killing of 17 people at a Florida high school only the latest major incident.

"I've been a trauma surgeon for over 40 years and have seen a lot of gunshot wounds," he said, but an elementary school massacre is "entirely different. These are 6-year-olds with wounds from very high-powered weaponry, and it changes you."

Jacobs and other like-minded surgeons formed a group that expanded to include law enforcement and other first responders who developed strategies for helping victims survive.

In many school shootings, more victims could be saved if someone had at least slowed their bleeding.

"It takes a long time, longer than it takes to bleed to death, to clear the classroom, secure it and make sure there's not another



CHARLIE NEIBERGALL/AP

Dr. Richard Sidwell instructs Madonna Coates on wound packing during a medical training session for teachers and staff at Southeast Polk High School in Pleasant Hill, Iowa.

shooter," he said.

The initiative, dubbed Stop the Bleed, has spread quickly and training is available in all states.

Georgia has been a leader, spending more than \$1 million to expand a test program and ship medical supplies to schools. Since last spring, the Georgia Trauma Commission, a state agency that works to improve emergency care, has coordinated the training of more than 18,000 educators.

Many teachers who might have recoiled at becoming a battlefield medic have come around as school security measures have repeatedly failed to prevent shootings. In many cases, the shooters are students who have ready access to the building. And lockdowns can add to the risk of death.

In Bend, Ore., paramedic Nolan McGinnis leapt at the chance to

train school personnel on how to treat victims. He was among the first paramedics to arrive at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Ore., after a 2015 shooting that left 10 people dead.

"Especially with these school shootings, you never know if the shooter is going to give himself up or take his own life before we get there, or if it will be 15 minutes and we're still waiting to go onto the scene," McGinnis said.

The Bend trainers are also teaching high school students the techniques, and a group of students is raising money for bleeding control kits.

"A single person can't stop a shooting but one person can save multiple lives, and to have something like that on my conscience is a great feeling," said Sierra Sheeks, a Bend Senior High sophomore.

At the Iowa training, about a dozen teachers, aides and others gathered in a classroom before the school day began for Southeast Polk's nearly 2,000 students. Although no shootings have occurred at the school, the drumbeat of reports about threats, rumors and lockdowns in every region keeps the danger in mind.

Trauma care specialist Brian Feist and surgeon Richard Sidwell used a foam limb to demonstrate proper techniques, then gave teachers a chance to practice packing wounds and cinching tourniquets.

Teacher Denise Gulling noted that kids now accept that shootings could happen. They regularly have drills on when to lockdown and hide in their classroom. Now, "this gives me one more option for helping," she said.

Michigan's top court hearing cases over guns and schools

By ED WHITE
Associated Press

ANN ARBOR, Mich. — A gun openly carried by a spectator at a school concert in 2015 has turned into a major legal case as the Michigan Supreme Court considers whether the state's public schools can trump the Legislature and adopt their own restrictions on firearms.

The case from Ann Arbor has been on the court's docket for more than a year. But arguments set for Wednesday are getting extra attention in the wake of a Florida school shooting in February that killed 17.

There's no dispute that Michigan law bars people from possessing a gun inside

a weapon-free school zone. But there's a wrinkle: Someone with a concealed pistol permit can enter school property with a gun that's openly holstered.

Though rare, it happened three years ago at a choir concert at Ann Arbor Pioneer High School, scaring teens, staff and spectators. The school board responded by banning all guns, with exceptions for police.

The Clio district, north of Flint, has a similar policy. The Supreme Court is hearing challenges from gun owners in both communities.

Gun rights advocates argue local governments, including elected school boards, can't step into an area reserved for the Michigan Legislature under state law. They point to

a Lansing-area library whose ban on the open display of guns was struck down by the state appeals court in 2012.

But in Ann Arbor and Clio, another three-judge panel at the appeals court said schools are in a different category and have freedom to further restrict guns.

Ken Herman, a paramedic and gun-owning parent who sued the Clio district, believes the appeals court got it wrong. In a filing at the Supreme Court, his attorney said schools have a duty to keep students safe, but lawmakers have "chosen to reserve the power to regulate the possession of firearms."

Students are paying attention to the cases. Paige Tar, a junior at Northville High School

in suburban Detroit, is part of a statewide student group, Engage 18, which favors giving schools authority over guns. She said she's been involved in stressful discussions over what to do during a shooting.

"My point is the school is turned into some sort of sick war game where the goal is to survive," Tar said.

The state's highest court has allowed outside groups to file briefs, including the Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence. The Washington-based group said Michigan schools must have the power to set safety policies.

But the Michigan Coalition for Responsible Gun Ownership said schools must decide some ground to the Legislature.



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NATION

Shooting for success in life

Advocates: School gun clubs teach discipline, not violence

By LISA MARIE PANE
Associated Press

DAHLONEGA, Ga. — Their classmates took to the streets to protest gun violence and to implore adults to restrict guns, seeming to forecast a generational shift in attitudes toward the Second Amendment. But at high school and college gun ranges around the country, teens and young adults gather to practice shooting and to talk about the positive influence firearms have had on their lives.

What do they say they learn? Patience. Discipline. Responsibility. "I've never gone out onto a range and not learned something new," said Lydia Odlin, 21, a member of the Georgia Southern University rifle team.

There are an estimated 5,000 teams at high schools and universities around the country, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation, and their popularity hasn't waned despite criticism after it emerged that the gunman who killed 14 students and three staff members at a Florida high school had been a member of the JROTC rifle team. The youths who are involved, coaches and parents say there's an enormous difference between someone bent on violence and school gun clubs that focus on safety and teach skills that make navigating life's hardships easier.

The clubs use a variety of firearms — from air rifles that shoot pellets to 9 mm pistols that fire

bullets. Its members invest hundreds of dollars in specialized stiff uniforms and shoes that provide stability and support for spending hours standing, kneeling or lying prone to fire at targets downrange. Some have hopes of representing the U.S. in the Olympics. Some simply love the camaraderie and mental focus required.

On a recent weekend, nearly a dozen high school and college gun team members gathered at the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega to work with JP O'Connor, a coach affiliated with USA Shooting, the Olympic organization. For the first hour he only talks — not about techniques or scores, but about mental strategy.

"I want to encourage you to be self-aware and to be disciplined about what you're doing," he said. "If you are patient with yourself, life is a lot easier — or less difficult."

Many of the students came with their parents. All of them say they have no qualms about putting firearms into the hands of kids, many of whom are too young to drive cars, to vote or to buy alcohol.

"So many people have assumed — and I picked that word on purpose — that guns are bad," O'Connor told The Associated Press. "Some people are, 'I can't believe you're teaching kids to shoot.' Well, I'm not teaching kids to shoot. I'm teaching kids life skills. And I'm teaching them about a topic that is very



PHOTOS BY LISA MARIE PANE/AP

Lydia Odlin, from Scarborough, Maine, stands with her air rifle March 17 outside a gun range at the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega, Ga. Odlin, a student at Georgia Southern University, was attending a training session with several other high school and college students.



JP O'Connor, a USA Shooting instructor, talks with students at a gun range at the University of North Georgia in Dahlonega.

contentious ... and when we educate people about something and they're not ignorant about it, then we're actually safer."

Emily Clegg, from Monroe, Ga., accompanied her daughter, Ashley, 16, to O'Connor's session. Clegg said that in the two years Ashley has been involved in the JROTC program, she's seen "tremendous, positive things" happen to her, from motivation and leadership to learning to set goals.

Everyone is upset by gun violence, "but I don't think what students are doing here will lead to that," Clegg said.

Mike Lewis, who started the Carrollton High School team, recalled bringing his .22-caliber rifle to school in the 1980s. He might open up the trunk in the school parking lot to show it off to his classmates or one of the

teachers. "Now there's a whole knee-jerk reaction based on ignorance and misunderstanding," he lamented.

It's a unique sport that doesn't attract typical jocks, he said. Rather than brawn, it's a very brainy sport, and he's proud that most of his team is made up of straight-A students.

Kevin Neuendorf, the director of marketing communications at USA Shooting, said views toward school gun clubs are part of the cultural divide in the country.

"There are a lot of misperceptions out there about the gun culture and all that, but for many, it's just a way of life," he said. "Most people who are shooters respect the sport and respect the game and have a respect for the firearm they shoot and for the people around them. I question anybody

who can't go out to a gun range and have fun. That's the way our athletes see it and that's the way our sport is built.

"It's no different than playing basketball or soccer. ... For our athletes and for our club members and for our parents, that gun is no different than Serena's (Williams) tennis racket ... and through that gun and through that firearm, what comes? Unbelievable discipline, opportunity, showing them success. Not every kid can be successful at basketball or football."

Odlin grew up in Maine, a microcosm of the country's divisions over guns. In the northern, more rural parts of the state, hunting is more prevalent. But in the southern, more-populated part, she said, she wasn't even allowed to wear her rifle team's T-shirt in high school.

"Overall, it was something you just didn't talk about. You just kind of avoided the topic of guns," she said.

As soon as she moved to Georgia, she was greeted with more acceptance.

"You say you're on a rifle team, there's no negativity surrounded by it," she said. "It's, 'Oh cool. What do you shoot? How far do you shoot?'"

Few go on to compete at the college level. After spending time working at a range and honing her skills, Odlin made the team in her second year. What she learns on the range, she said, has helped her in untold ways.

"You can't become a quality shooter without becoming a quality person off the range, too. The amount of focus just blends right into schoolwork," she said.



A student trains with an air rifle at a gun range at the University of North Georgia on March 17.



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NATION

GOP officials go back to DC, Trump wish list in mind

By LISA MASCARO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Republican majority in Congress was on a glide path to the midterms, having passed tax cuts into law and backed off budget battles with a year-end funding package. But President Donald Trump was not impressed.

Trump started picking apart some GOP accomplishments, including the big budget bill, and complaining that others, namely his border wall, remained undone.

Now, Congress returns from spring break Monday scrambling to compile a to-do list that will satisfy a president who increasingly needs to be promoting their achievements, not undermining them, as they prepare to hit the campaign trail.

"A lot of members would prefer to spend the rest of the year focusing on getting re-elected, but there's pressure from the White House ... to deliver more policy wins before facing voters," said Alex Conant, a GOP strategist.

But belittling lawmakers and badgering them to work doesn't help inspire voters, confidence in Republicans already fading, an enthusiasm gap with Democrats fired up to go to the polls, strategists say. They need Trump on their side, not piling on.

"Every day that Trump attacks Congress, he hurts Republicans' chance of keeping the majority," Conant said.

The problems between Trump and Congress, festering for months, spilled into the open when the president toyed with vetoing the \$1.3 trillion funding bill he then spent too much time on Democratic priorities and not enough on his, including the border wall.

While Congress was away, Trump started talking about rescinding some of that money, winking with House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., on a do-over package that would force lawmakers into another round of budget votes this spring or summer. It remains under discussion, aides said.

At the same time, Trump's revolving door of Cabinet secretaries has created a legislative logjam of its own. It has forced the Senate to launch lengthy confirmation hearings, starting with this week for Mike Pompeo as the new secretary of state. After that, there are Trump's picks for CIA director and Veterans Affairs secretary.

The nomination battles are sure to dredge up tough debates — over the Russia probe, the CIA's use of waterboarding and other harsh interrogation techniques now outlawed, and the spiraling costs and care at the VA. They're hardly the top conversations lawmakers would choose as their focus in the months before an election.

A senior administration official told reporters on a conference call last week that border security could be among the biggest issues for Congress this spring and summer.

That likely is news to Republicans running for re-election, particularly in swing districts or with sizable minority populations, who have shown little interest in the kind of beefed-up border security the administration has proposed to turn back unaccompanied minors and to clamp down on asylum-seekers.

To complicate the agenda further, Trump wants Congress to try again on an immigration overhaul, an issue Republicans were happy to shelve earlier this year after he rejected their compromise with Democrats. They offered \$25 billion for the border wall in exchange for deportation protections for the young immigrants known as "dreamers."

Trump's to-do list is not the springtime agenda Republicans in Congress were hoping for. Instead, they had expected to spend the next few months tackling more modest measures. Among them: legislation to address the opioid epidemic and symbolic House bills on making tax cuts permanent or achieving a balanced budget that, though unlikely to become law, could motivate Republicans to go to the polls in November.



EVAN VUCCI/AP

President Donald Trump talks with reporters Thursday aboard Air Force One on a flight to Joint Base Andrews, Md.

'The hell with it': Trump tires of staff advice more and more

By ZEKE MILLER
AND JILL COLVIN
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The speech was written. A cast of relatable Americans with emotional stories was standing by to reinforce the message. But President Donald Trump was in no mood to play along.

"The hell with it," Trump said, recounting the scene with his aides to a West Virginia crowd last week. Trump tossed the staff-prepared remarks on tax cuts into the air and ducked as the paper fluttered to the floor. "I said, 'This is boring, come on.' Tell it like it is."

This president has never been one to stick to a script, but that abandoned speech illustrates a new phase in Trump's presidency. He is increasingly at odds with his staff — and growing wise to their tactics.

One favored staff strategy is to guide the president to the right decision by making the conventional choice seem like the only realistic option. Except now, 14 months into his administration, Trump is on to them, and he's making clear he won't be boxed in.

That was the message that an irritated Trump delivered to his national security team last week in a classified meeting about U.S. involvement in Syria.

Trump's advisers, among them Defense Secretary Jim Mattis and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Joseph Dunford, were

advocating for an ongoing U.S. military presence to provide stability. They aimed to rely on the same playbook they used last year in persuading Trump to keep U.S. troops in Afghanistan indefinitely. They would paint a dire picture of a pullout, of regional chaos benefiting Russia and Iran, and the potential resurgence of Islamic State.

But even before they could begin their pitch in that meeting Tuesday, Trump headed them off, saying he wanted to remove U.S. troops immediately. The ensuing, heated argument put new distance between the president and his team and left the military with a mandate, if not a formal order, to remove U.S. troops from Syria within six months.

The episode stood in sharp contrast to the earlier meeting on Afghanistan, when Trump went along with his advisers despite his instincts to pull out completely.

More than 10 current and former White House officials and outside advisers spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to describe such internal discussions.

The shift has as much to do with changes in personnel as changes in the president's attitude. Former White House staff secretary Rob Porter, for one, was viewed as a person Trump could trust to be an honest broker and to make sure that all options were being faithfully presented to him.

During the Afghanistan meet-

ing, aides went out of their way to make it appear that they were considering Trump's perspective with an even hand. But with Syria, aides said, Trump felt he was being steamrolled and lashed out.

Managing a boss who despises being managed is a difficult game. And those who have succeeded have proceeded carefully. Some aides, convinced that Trump puts more stock in what he sees on TV than in his own aides' advice, regularly phone prominent commentators and news hosts to provide talking points on everything from tax policy to Syria in hopes of influencing Trump. Similar strategies also have been embraced by foreign governments and outside groups trying to sway the president's thinking.

Some aides insist that Trump has long been aware of his staff's management strategies, and was merely playing along with their schemes. But the recent changes in how Trump interacts with his staff have also been driven by a shake-up in White House personnel that includes the weakening of the chief of staff, John Kelly.

During the past six weeks, the decision-making process overseen by Porter largely has broken down, giving Trump's outside confidants a new opening.

Some of those outsiders were once insiders. Now gone, they've seized the opportunity to influence Trump once again.

DOJ taps prosecutor to speed response to document demands

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department has tapped a federal prosecutor in Chicago to help speed its response to Republican document demands related to the FBI's handling of the Hillary Clinton email investigation after President Donald Trump accused officials of "slow walking" their release.

The department is facing mounting pressure from Republicans to fulfill a subpoena

by the House Judiciary Committee for more than 1 million documents as it examines the agency's 2016 investigation into Clinton's private email server. Trump on Saturday slammed the pace of the response, tweeting, "What does the Department of Justice and FBI have to hide?" and says the agencies are "stalling, but for what reason? Not looking good!"

Attorney General Jeff Sessions and FBI Director Christopher Wray this past week-

end asked Chicago's U.S. attorney, John Lausch, to ensure document production is fast and that any redactions are necessary.

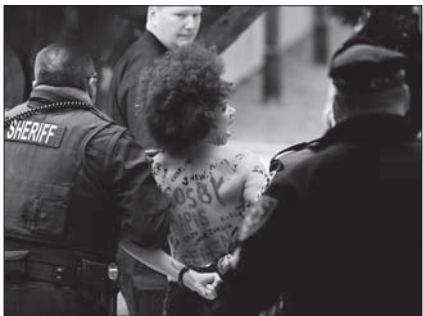
"Our goal is to assure Congress, the president and the American people that the FBI is going to produce the relevant documents and will do so completely and with integrity and professionalism," Justice Department spokeswoman Sarah Isgur Flores said in a statement.

The Republican chairman of the com-

mittee, Rep. Robert Goodlatte, of Virginia, also is seeking documents related to the firing of former deputy FBI Director Andrew McCabe.

An upcoming inspector general's report is expected to conclude that McCabe had authorized the release of information to the media and was not forthcoming with the watchdog office as it examined the bureau's handling of an investigation into Clinton's emails.

NATION



COREY PERRINE/AP

A protester is detained after Bill Cosby arrives for his sexual assault trial at the Montgomery County Courthouse in Norristown, Pa., on Monday.

Protester rushes at Cosby as retrial begins

BY MICHAEL R. SISAK
Associated Press

NORRISTOWN, Pa. — A topless protester with “Women’s Lives Matter” written on her body jumped a barricade and got within a few feet of Bill Cosby on Monday as the comedian walked into a suburban Philadelphia courthouse for the start of his sexual assault retrial.

The woman ran in front of Cosby toward a bank of TV cameras but was intercepted by sheriff’s deputies and led away in handcuffs. The European feminist group Femen claimed the protester as one of its own.

Cosby seemed startled by the commotion as a half-dozen protesters chanted at him.

Cosby spokesman Andrew Wyatt praised deputies for their quick action but urged court officials to increase security.

“It’s a different world. Things have changed,” Wyatt told The Associated Press, referring to recent mass shootings and other episodes. “You never know who’s going to want to make a name for themselves.”

The protester, Nicole Rochelle, 39, of Little Falls, N.J., was charged with disorderly conduct, authorities said. Inna Shevchenko, a Paris-based leader of Femen, told The Associated Press that the activist was seeking to defend Cosby’s alleged victims, calling the protest “our contribution to the global revolt launched by #MeToo.

The disruption came ahead of opening statements, which were delayed while the judge sorted through allegations raised late Friday that a juror told a woman during jury selection that he thought Cosby was guilty. Cosby’s lawyers want the juror removed from the case.

Cosby’s first trial last spring ended with jurors unable to reach a unanimous verdict after five days of tense deliberations on charges that he drugged and molested Andrea Constand at his suburban Philadelphia home in 2004.

The 80-year-old comedian, who

has said the sexual contact was consensual, faces three counts of aggravated indecent assault, each punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

His retrial is taking place in a radically changed and potentially more hostile environment. The #MeToo movement caught fire four months after the first trial, raising awareness of sexual misconduct as it toppled Harvey Weinstein, Sen. Al Franken, Matt Lauer and other powerful men.

Nearly every potential juror questioned for the case this time knew about #MeToo.

Kristen Houser, of the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, said that could help prosecutors overcome the skepticism some jurors had last time about Constand’s yearlong wait to report her allegations to the police.

After limiting the focus of the first trial, Judge Steven O’Neill has been willing to let both sides push the retrial well beyond Constand’s allegations.

This time, O’Neill is letting prosecutors have five additional accusers testify as they attempt to show Cosby made a habit of drugging and violating women. The judge allowed just one other accuser to take the stand last time.

“This one will be harder for the defense,” said Laurie Levenson, of Loyola Law School in Los Angeles. This time, Constand “is not alone, and there is strength in numbers.”

In another difference, the judge this time is letting Cosby’s legal team call as a witness a former co-worker of Constand’s at Temple University who said Constand spoke of setting up a “high-profile person” so she could sue and enjoy a big payday. Constand’s lawyer has said the co-worker is lying.

The judge also decided the jury can hear the answer to one of the biggest questions hanging over the case: How much did Cosby pay Constand to settle her lawsuit against him more than a decade ago? The two sides agreed at the first trial not to mention the lawsuit.

Facebook CEO meets with lawmakers before hearings

BY MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg met privately with lawmakers Monday ahead of his first time testifying on Capitol Hill.

Zuckerberg will testify in the Senate on Tuesday and in the House on Wednesday about the company’s ongoing data privacy scandal and how it failed to guard against other abuses of its service. He is also expected to be asked about Russia’s use of social media during the 2016 U.S. election.

One of Zuckerberg’s first meetings was with Florida Sen. Bill Nelson. He is the top Democrat on the Senate Commerce Committee, which will hold a joint hearing Tuesday with the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Nelson and Senate Commerce Committee Chairman John Thune asked Zuckerberg to testify to “restore lost trust” in the company.

As news of the meetings came to light, Facebook announced Monday that it has suspended another app firm that may have misused data, adding to a growing list of firms being investigated by the social media company.

Facebook said CubeYou, a firm associated with the University of Cambridge Psychometrics Centre, will be suspended after CNBC notified Facebook that CubeYou was collecting information about users through quizzes.

According to CNBC, CubeYou labeled its quizzes “non-profit academic research” then shared user information with marketers. CNBC said CubeYou denies misusing data.

On Saturday, Facebook said it suspended AggregateIQ, a Canadian political consulting firm, amid media reports it had ties to Cambridge Analytica, a British data mining company accused of obtaining data from up to 87 million Facebook users to sway elections. Cambridge Analytica got its data through an app built by a University of Cambridge psychol-

ogy researcher, Aleksandr Kogan.

The suspension comes as Facebook prepared to notify users about whether their data had been accessed by Cambridge Analytica.

Starting Monday, the 87 million users who might have had their data shared were to get a detailed message on their news feeds. Facebook said most of the affected users (more than 70 million) are in the U.S., though there are more than 1 million each in the Philippines, Indonesia and the U.K.

In addition, all 2.2 billion Facebook users will receive a notice titled “Protecting Your Information” with a link to see what apps they use and what information they have shared with those apps. If they want, they can shut off apps individually or turn off third-party access to their apps completely.

Reeling from its worst privacy crisis in history — allegations that this Donald Trump-affiliated data mining firm may have used ill-gotten user data to try to influence elections — Facebook is in full damage control mode. Zuckerberg acknowledged that he made a “huge mistake” in failing to take a broad enough view of what Facebook’s responsibility is in the world.

Cambridge Analytica whistleblower Christopher Wylie previously estimated that more than 50 million people were compromised by a personality quiz that collected data from users and their friends. In an interview aired Sunday on NBC’s “Meet the Press,” Wylie said the true number could be even larger than 87 million.

That Facebook app, called “This is Your Digital Life,” was a personality quiz created in 2014 by Kogan, who paid about 270,000 people to take it. The app vacuumed up not just the data of the people who took it, but also — thanks to Facebook’s loose restrictions — data from their friends, too, including details that they hadn’t intended to share publicly.

Facebook later limited the data that apps can access, but it was too late in this case.

Teacher protests enter 2nd week

Associated Press

OKLAHOMA CITY — Oklahoma lawmakers returned to the state Capitol on Monday as teachers in the state’s largest school districts entered a second week of massive demonstrations to demand more education funding.

Teachers, students and supporters were again expected to flood the Capitol. Leaders of Oklahoma’s largest teacher’s union have said protests will continue unless lawmakers approve a repeal of a capital gains tax exemption and the governor vetoes a repeal of a proposed lodging tax.

The \$5-per-night lodging tax for hotels and motels would generate about \$50 million annually. It’s faced opposition from chambers of commerce and the hospitality industry. Asking the capital gains tax deduction would generate about \$120 million annually.

The Senate sent Gov. Mary Fallin two bills Friday projected to generate \$40 million more annually for education by expanding tribal gambling and taxing certain internet sales. Teachers said that wasn’t enough.

Fallin already approved raising teacher pay by about \$6,100.



MIKE SIMONS, TULSA (OKLA.) WORLD/AP

Amanda Girdler, a teacher with Oklahoma City Public Schools, speaks at the Capitol in Oklahoma City, on Friday.

The state’s Department of Education agreed Monday to extend by one week the testing period for students taking standardized tests. The testing period began April 2, but tens of thousands of students have been out of class since then because of the teacher

walkout that began the same day.

State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister said she hoped the extension would prevent any penalties or loss of funding from the federal government, which mandates that 95 percent of students take the tests.

NATION

NY students injured when bus hits overpass

Associated Press

LAKEVIEW, N.Y. — A charter bus carrying teenagers returning from a spring break trip Sunday night struck a bridge overpass on Long Island, seriously injuring six passengers and mangled the entire length of the top of the bus.

The crash happened shortly after 9 p.m. on the Southern State Parkway in Lakeview, according to New York State Police.

One of the six injured passengers had very serious injuries, said State Police Maj. David Candalaria. Thirty-seven other passengers suffered minor injuries.

"Everybody was able to walk out except one, which we extricated," Lakeview Fire Department Chief Patrick McNeill told Newsday. "There was glass everywhere. The roof of the bus is down to the top of the seat covers."

Video shows teenagers sitting and standing outside the white

damaged bus, some draped in blankets, as firefighters inspect the wreckage.

The 38 students from various Long Island high schools, along with five chaperones, had just returned from John F. Kennedy International Airport and were heading to a shopping mall to meet up with parents, police said.

Police said the driver was being evaluated and did not seem to be familiar with commercial vehicle restrictions on the parkway.

A sign posted by the state on the overpass said the clearance is 7 feet, 7 inches. According to Newsday, the manufacturer said the height of the bus involved in the crash was about 12 feet.

In 2017, there were reports that an electronic alarm system would be installed on the parkway to warn drivers of vehicles too high for the overpass.



KEVIN HAGEN/AP

A bus that was carrying teenage passengers sits on the side of a highway after it hit an overpass on the Southern State Parkway in Lakeview, N.Y., on Monday.

Radiation exposure halts plant demolition

By NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS

Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. — Seven decades after making key portions of the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan, workers at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation are being exposed to radiation as they tear down buildings that helped create the nation's nuclear arsenal.

Dozens of workers demolishing a plutonium processing plant from the 1940s have inhaled or ingested radioactive particles in the past year, and even carried some of that radiation into their vehicles, according to the U.S. Department of Energy.

The incidents have prompted the federal government, along with state regulators, to halt the demolition of the sprawling Plutonium Finishing Plant until a safe plan can be developed.

The contamination has also shaken confidence in a massive cleanup of Hanford, the nation's most polluted nuclear weapons production site. The work costs the federal treasury around \$2 billion a year. Hanford is near the city of Richland, about 200 miles southeast of Seattle.

"This is a very disturbing set of incidents," said Tom Carpenter, head of the Seattle-based watchdog group Hanford Challenge.

The Energy Department, which owns Hanford, has launched an independent investigation into the spread of radiation at the plant. The investigation will be conducted by an agency office that is not connected to work at Hanford.



NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS/AP

The Plutonium Finishing Plant on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation near Richland, Wash., is seen last year. Officials say workers demolishing the plant have ingested or inhaled radioactive particles.

Radioactive particles are known to have contaminated 42 workers, which led to the shutdown of demolition, the agency has said.

Carpenter said widespread worker contamination has been rare at Hanford in recent decades. Plutonium production ended in the 1980s, and the site in 1989 switched its focus to cleanup of nuclear wastes.

"It's one of the more serious events to happen in the age of cleanup at Hanford," Carpenter said. "There have been other incidents, but none rose to the level of plutonium contamination of this many people and private vehicles and being found miles and miles away."

A union representing some Hanford workers said it was closely monitoring the situation. "We've got our eyes on [the Energy Department] and will do what we've got to do to keep workers safe," said Paul Ruggles, vice president of the Hanford Atomic Metal Trades Council.

Hanford officials issued a report in late March that said a total of 42 Hanford workers inhaled

or ingested radioactive particles from demolition of the Plutonium Finishing Plant when they were exposed during contamination events in June and December of last year.

Radioactive contamination was also found outside plant offices and inside two dozen vehicles, the report said.

Seven workers' homes were checked for radioactive contamination, with none found, the report said.

The report concluded Hanford officials placed too much reliance on air-monitoring systems that failed to pick up the spread of radioactive particles.

Hanford was created during the Manhattan Project in World War II and made the plutonium for the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, Japan, that effectively ended the war.

The Plutonium Finishing Plant was constructed a few years later, and helped process most of the plutonium for the nation's nuclear arsenal. The plant took liquid plutonium and shaped it into hockey puck-sized disks for use in nuclear warheads.

Report: Airlines getting better in many areas

By DAVID KOENIG

Associated Press

U.S. airlines are getting better at many things except getting you to your destination on time.

They are losing fewer bags. Complaints are down.

And on the anniversary of a man getting dragged off a plane because a crewmember needed his seat, airlines are bumping fewer passengers.

That's the upshot of a report issued by academics who analyze numbers compiled by the Transportation Department.

"The industry is improving, but there are still a lot of frustrated travelers out there," said one of the researchers, Brent Bowen, dean of aviation at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. He blamed a lack of transparency in the ticketing process and the increase in delayed flights.

The industrywide on-time performance — never great — declined a bit last year, when 80.2 percent of flights arrived within 14 minutes of schedule, which is the government's definition of on time. That was down from 81.4 percent in 2016.

Complaints lodged with the Transportation Department dropped too, although most aggrieved travelers complain directly to the airline — carriers don't report those numbers.

Bowen surmised that most travelers don't know how to file a complaint with the government. Even if they do, he said, their expectations for airline service "are so low now that they just want to be done with the experience and not have to reflect on it and write a complaint."

The report compiled by Embry-Riddle and Wichita State University is now in its 28th year.

Knife-wielding man hurts 3

Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — A knife-wielding man injured three people in an attack in downtown Indianapolis after being told to stop playing a siren on a bullhorn, authorities said Sunday.

Four people, including the suspect, were hospitalized after the attack Saturday afternoon on the American Legion Mall and outside the Central Library across the street. Two were in critical condition and two in serious condition, Indianapolis Fire Department Battalion Chief Rita Reith said.

Gary Madison, 57, of Indianapolis faces three preliminary charges

of battery by means of a deadly weapon, jail records showed.

Taylor George told The Indianapolis Star she was with a group of family and friends enjoying a sunny day when the man rode up on a bicycle, got off and began playing a siren on a bullhorn. George said she and a female friend asked him to stop.

After being told to stop, the man immediately pulled out a knife and tried to stab her and her friend, George said.

Four men in her group rushed the suspect. One of her friends was stabbed in the stomach and two in their arms, she said. The suspect stabbed himself in the abdomen accidentally, George said.

WORLD

Another ex-S. Korean leader is facing corruption charges

By HYUNG-JIN KIM

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — South Korean prosecutors formally charged jailed former President Lee Myung-bak with a range of corruption charges Monday, making him the country's fourth leader to face a criminal trial in about three decades.

On Friday, Lee's conservative successor, Park Geun-hye, was sentenced to 24 years in prison in a separate corruption scandal for which she was removed from office following months of huge anti-government rallies.

The Seoul Central District Prosecutors' Office said it charged Lee with taking a total of \$10 million in bribes from the

country's spy agency, Samsung and others.

The bribes include \$636,000 from the National Intelligence Agency's official funds and \$5.8 million in legal expenses that Samsung paid on behalf of his private auto parts company, DAS, a prosecutors' statement said.

It said Lee's government provided Samsung with special favors such as a 2009 pardon of its convicted chairman, Lee Kun-hee, in return for the bribes. Lee had been fined and sentenced to a suspended three-year prison term in connection with losses at a Samsung affiliate and tax evasion.

Lee Myung-bak has also been charged with embezzling about \$33 million in funds from DAS and evading corporate taxes to

taking \$281,270, according to the prosecutors.

Most of Lee's alleged crimes took place while he served as president from 2008 to 2013 or when he was a leading conservative ruling party candidate before winning the 2007 election, prosecutors said.

Lee was a Hyundai executive and a Seoul mayor before becoming the country's first president with a business background.

He has been held at a Seoul detention center since his arrest last month. He has accused the current liberal government of President Moon Jae-in of retaliating against him for the 2009 death of Moon's friend, liberal ex-President Roh Moo-hyun, who leapt to his death during a corruption



JUNG YEON-LEAP

Former South Korean President Lee Myung-bak was indicted Monday on charges including bribery and embezzlement.

investigation of his family while Lee was in office.

Before Park and Lee, two other ex-presidents, Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Tae-woo, both former army generals, were convicted of bribery, mutiny and treason and spent time in prison. Park's father, dictator Park Chung-hee, was assassinated by his own spy chief in 1979 following 18 years of strong-arm rule.

Pope Francis seeks 'saints next door'

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis is calling for ordinary Catholics to live holy lives in whatever they do, stressing "saints next door" are more pleasing to God than religious elites who insist on perfect adherence to rules and doctrine.

In a document released Monday, Francis said defending the poor and migrants is "equally sacred" to defending the unborn. That seemed to be a not-so-veiled critique of the conservative right in the U.S. for whom opposing abortion trumps the Gospel mandate to love and welcome the stranger.

The document, "Rejoice and Be Glad," is the third apostolic exhortation of Francis' papacy. The first two ruled conservatives by condemning capitalism and suggesting divorced and civilly remarried Catholics can receive Communion.

Over 50 dead in April from bootleg liquor

JAKARTA, Indonesia — More than 50 people have died in little more than a week after drinking bootleg liquor in western Indonesia, including in the capital, Jakarta, officials said Monday.

In the latest incident, 20 people died between Thursday and Monday in Cicalengka subdistrict near the West Java capital of Bandung.

The head of the state-run hospital in Cicalengka, Yan Sumpena, said 19 people died at the hospital and one was dead on arrival.

In total, some 40 people were admitted with symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, shortness of breath and unconsciousness, and said still being treated, Sumpena said.

High taxes on alcohol have spawned a black market for booze among the poor in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, where drinking alcohol is frowned upon but not illegal under civil law.

Media reports said police had closed four liquor stores in the Cicalengka region and confiscated dozens of jerry cans containing palm wines and hundreds of bottles of various types of liquor.

Strikes to disrupt German flights Tuesday

BERLIN — German labor union Verdi says its members will stage a strike Tuesday at the Frankfurt airport, Germany's biggest. The move prompted Lufthansa to cancel more than 800 flights.

The strike is part of a broader dispute over pay in German public-sector jobs that also includes utility companies, kindergartens and municipal administrations.

Verdi said Monday that strikes are also planned at Munich and Bremen airports. Lufthansa, Germany's biggest airline, said it was canceling more than 800 planned flights, including 58 intercontinental connections.

It said that about 90,000 passengers would be affected, and that it plans to return to a regular schedule on Wednesday.

From The Associated Press

Israel strikes Gaza after bombs found on border

By TIA GOLDENBERG

Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Israeli fighter jets struck a Hamas target in the Gaza Strip on Monday in response to two explosive devices found near Israel's border with the territory, the military said, amid a flare-up in deadly Israeli-Palestinian violence.

No injuries were reported in the strike, but it comes amid a wave of mass protests by Palestinians along Israel's border with Gaza that have drawn Israeli fire.

On Monday, the Health Ministry in Gaza said a 45-year-old Palestinian man has died of

his wounds after being shot in the legs by Israeli troops during a protest late last month.

The man's death brings to 32 the number of people killed by Israeli fire since March 30. Out of that number, 26 were killed during the protests at the Gaza-Israel border. Among the others killed were Palestinian gunmen who had attempted to cross into Israel and two militants killed by Israeli forces.

Thousands of Palestinians have protested along the Gaza-Israel border as part of a series of demonstrations called by the Islamic militant Hamas group that rules Gaza. The protests are meant to last until May 15, the anniversary of Israel's founding, when Palestinians com-

memorate their mass uprising during the 1948 war over Israel's creation.

Israel says the protests are a smoke screen for attacks on its troops and attempts to breach the border fence. It says militants have attempted to carry out shootings, plant bombs or infiltrate the fence, and that its snipers have fired only at "instigators" trying to carry out attacks.

The military said it struck a Hamas "terror target" in a military compound in Gaza early on Monday. On Sunday, the military said two explosive devices were found near Israel's border with Gaza, hours after three Palestinians from Gaza crossed briefly into Israel.

3 in critical condition after van attack in Germany

Associated Press

BERLIN — Three people remain in critical condition after the deadly van rampage in the western German city of Muenster, a hospital official said Monday.

A 48-year-old German killed two people and injured more than 20 others when he crashed into the crowd outside a popular bar on Saturday afternoon. He then fatally shot himself in the van.

Muenster's University Hospital said it has been able to release two of the eight patients it admitted.

"These patients still have life-threatening injuries, so it's uncertain how things will turn out," Michael Raschke, the hospital's deputy medical director, told reporters.

A fourth patient's condition has improved, he added.

Hospital officials said the wounded had a variety of injuries, including to the head, pelvis and abdomen.

Investigators were still puzz-



FRISO GENTSCH, DPA/AP

People light candles during a service in front of the cathedral in Muenster, Germany, one day after a man killed two people and injured 20 by crashing into a crowd drinking outside a bar before killing himself.

ling over what prompted the driver to plow into the crowd.

Police have said that an email he sent to a neighbor and others late last month contained "vague indications of suicidal thoughts,

but no indications of a danger to other people." They say there is no indication of any political motive or any accomplices.

Herbert Reul, the interior minister of North Rhine-Westphalia

state where Muenster is located, said the man had no license for the gun with which he killed himself.

"It was not a properly acquired weapon," he told WDR 5 radio.

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OPINION

Leader absent in battle to defend democracy

By FRED HIATT

The Washington Post

What if the West found itself "engaged in a fundamental contest between our free and open societies and closed and repressive systems" — and the U.S. president was on the wrong side?

This is not a hypothetical question. I heard the first part last week directly from the man who was still, at the time, President Donald Trump's national security adviser, Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster.

And though I was too polite and dutiful to say so, I thought I could hear in his parting shot a warning about the second part also: "It is time we expose those who glorimize and apologize in the service of communist, authoritarian and repressive governments."

McMaster's final address as a public official, at the Atlantic Council, was noted mostly for being tough on Russia, which it was, and candid about the West's inadequate response to Russian provocations, which it was also.

It was careful to praise the president's National Security Strategy (the formulation of which McMaster oversaw) and to insist that Trump "has repeatedly told the truth about these murderous regimes and oppressive doctrines."

But in fact it was about much more than Russia. McMaster's warning was more global, his estimation of the stakes more existential — and his vision so far removed from Trump's values-free, zero-sum approach to America in the world that it came across as a call to action to everyone else who may be called upon to defend democracy.

"Revisionist and repressive powers are attempting to undermine our values, our

institutions and our way of life," the general said.

"We are presently engaged in competitions with repressive and authoritarian systems to defend our way of life, to preserve our free and open societies," he said. "We must be confident. We must be active. We cannot be passive and hope that others will defend our freedom."

It was striking that McMaster chose as the setting for his last stand a dinner honoring the leaders of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. During their half-century of occupation by the Soviet Union, from 1940 to 1991, the United States never recognized the Soviet claim over them. In the quarter-century since, the Baltic republics have been exemplars of democratic reconstruction, even as Russia has harassed them from the east and larger countries to their west, such as Poland, have faltered in their commitment to liberal democracy.

Now, as McMaster suggested, the democratic model is under more pressure than at any time since the Cold War.

China's Communist rulers offer their regime as an alternative that can deliver economic growth with totalitarian control. Strongmen in nations that had moved toward electoral democracy, such as Egypt and Russia, have just engineered sham elections by locking up their most plausible opponents. U.S. allies that had seemed firmly in the democratic camp, including Thailand and Turkey, have slid back to authoritarianism.

"Democracy faced its most serious crisis in decades in 2017," Freedom House reported in January. "Seventy-one countries suffered net declines in political rights and civil liberties, with only 35 registering gains."

Ordinarily, at such a time, the world would look to America for leadership. But,

Freedom House said, the United States has "retreated from its traditional role as both a champion and an exemplar of democracy."

That retreat has been woven from dozens of statements, policy changes and missed opportunities from a president who famously seems to admire and, yes, glamorize dictators more than democrats — cheering when China's ruler declared himself president for life ("I think it's great!"); laughing with the Philippines' strongman as he demonized reporters; congratulating Egypt's dictator for his sham re-election; itching to withdraw from Syria to leave that field to Iran and Russia; abandoning human rights improvement as a policy objective anywhere in the world; proposing to gut funding for the National Endowment for Democracy; failing to nominate an assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor; and so on.

It could be worse. The administration, including as recently as Friday, has imposed sanctions on Russians for their misbehavior; it has provided weapons to Ukraine, and it decided not to abandon Afghanistan. Even without U.S. help, democracy survives in human events around the world, from Colombia to Indonesia, because human beings do cherish freedom.

But any urgency to "advance our values and defend our way of life," which McMaster called essential, is absent from this White House.

"The victory of free societies is not predestined," the general warned. "There's nothing inevitable about the course of human events and history. And there is no arc of history, there is no so-called end of history, that will ensure our success."

Fred Hiatt is The Washington Post's editorial page editor.

Air Force isn't weak link in US space strategy

By JOHN VENABLE

InsideSource.com

Recent Harvard Business Review article on change was titled: "Are you solving the right problem?" Every organization trying to further its competitive edge needs to sort through that question before embarking on any major shift in direction or reorganization.

Today, many in Congress are pressuring the Pentagon to start a new Space Corps. But these lawmakers seem to have skipped over this critical question.

Yes, the United States faces many defense challenges in space, but no one has explained how creating a fifth service branch — made up of existing Air Force organizations — will meet these challenges better than they do now.

Space Corps advocates argue that standing up a new service will solve three key problems: splintered command and control of U.S. space assets; insufficient focus on warfighting in space; and a lack of funding for these programs. Before trying to solve these problems, let's look at what caused them.

Why is space command and control so splintered? Because it evolved slowly, then all at once.

The first satellites were launched in the 1950s. The slow growth and limited availability of those assets restricted their effect, making them little more than novelties for most combatants. That changed with Operation Desert Storm, when commanders realized that GPS and other space-based systems had become indispensable in modern, high-tech warfare. Suddenly, services and agencies raced to solidify their

place in space without much in the way of guidance, direction or shaping from either Congress or the Pentagon.

The results were predictable. Today, 60 organizations govern space command and control. Eleven are charged with oversight, eight with acquisition. Six others define the requirements for space systems. And no single entity or individual is in charge of any of the three efforts, nor holds the reins for the lot.

Three of those 60 organizations belong to the Air Force. Each is aligned with and supports the goals of the Air Force Space Command. Command and control there is tight.

How about the lack of focus on space as a warfighting domain? Yes, the United States has been slow to think through the militarization of space. Perhaps that's because we have so many essential assets in space that most have avoided the thought of a shooting war "up there." We have too many to lose.

But that's not to say no one has been thinking. The highest level of training for conflict in the Air Force takes place at the vaunted Weapons School at Nellis Air Force Base, just outside Las Vegas. The Space Division of that school has been mastering warfighting in that domain since 1996.

As for funding, that has been and continues to be a serious problem. The wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and Syria have forced the services to make significant compromises. While funds were added to cover wartime fuel and munitions expenditures, they received no supplemental funding for recurring readiness training or the recapitalization of equipment.

For the Air Force, this has meant a pre-

capitous drop in stateside training over the last 15 years — including token levels of flight time for fighter pilots. Recapitalization has slowed to the point where the average age of manned aircraft is 36 years — the oldest in the history of the Air Force.

About the only Air Force mission area that hasn't grown dangerously anemic over the last 15 years has been the Air Force Space Command. While funding shortfalls have left platforms and aircrews to wither on the vine, there have been no readiness cuts for space. And while still not ideal, the Air Force has recapitalized its space assets, adding more than 100 satellites since 2004.

Is there a problem with space-based command and control, warfighter footing, and funding for space assets? You bet, but not within the Air Force. They have their space act together — which is why it would be silly to remove that mission from this organization, turn it over to a new stand-alone service and think you will fix things.

The real challenge lies with the 57 other space organizations. If Congress really wants to get serious about reorganizing national security space assets, then it would need to go big — consolidating all 60 space assets in one agency or pony up the funds it will take to put our space program back in front of the others.

But the proposal now on the table would merely remove the highest performing space operations from their Mother Ship. And that kind of Space Corps is the wrong answer to the wrong problem.

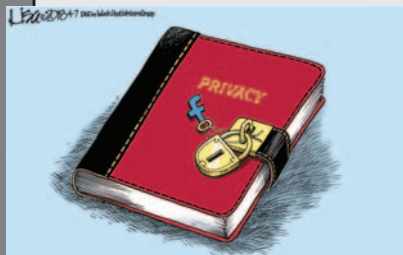
John Venable, a 25-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force, is a senior research fellow in The Heritage Foundation's Center for National Defense.

Looking at the news

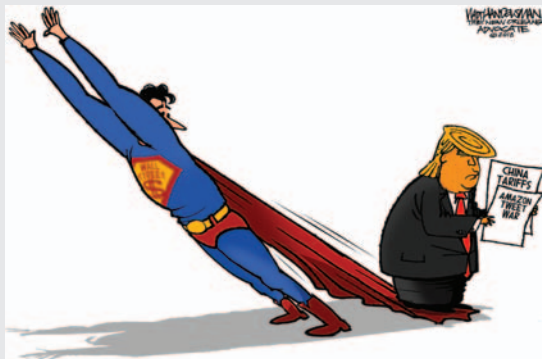
A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



JIM MORIN/MorinToons Syndicate



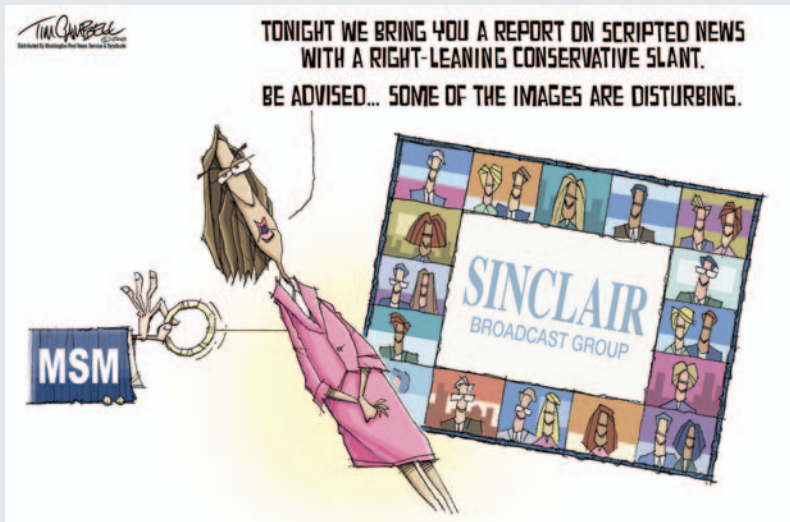
LISA BENSON/Washington Post Writers Group



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WALT HANDELSMAN/Tribune Content Agency



TIM CAMPBELL/Washington Post News Service

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Police: Urine found in library soap dispenser

MA BURLINGTON — Police are looking for a man connected to urine being found in a bathroom soap dispenser at Burlington Public Library. Urine was discovered by a patron in a cup inside a library bathroom on March 21, police officials said Friday.

Further inspection from library staff showed that urine had been poured into the soap dispenser and air freshener.

The library reported the incident to police the next day.

Woman rescued after falling 30 feet into well

PA ANNVILLE — Fire officials in central Pennsylvania said a woman was rescued after she fell about 30 feet into an abandoned well.

The Annville-Cleona Fire District reported on its Facebook page that the woman was reported down the Annville Township well just before 9 a.m. Saturday.

Local firefighters sought aid from special operations and rescue teams from Lancaster and Lebanon counties, and emergency personnel "set up a vertical hauling system" and rescued her.

Students' sailboat continues trip to Japan

AK SITKA — A miniature sailboat built by Oregon sixth-graders was put back out to sea to continue its voyage to Japan after running aground near Sitka.

The Daily Sitka Sentinel reported an Alaska fisherman discovered the boat in late February.

Science teacher Stacy Golden said her Blatchley Middle School students made some modifications to the vessel and launched it to sea Wednesday.

Students at Otto Peterson Elementary School in Scappoose, Ore., have launched the boat in December as part of an educational project sponsored by the Columbia River Museum.

The students built 10 fiberglass vessels, and half were launched from partner schools in Japan. The 5-foot boats are equipped with GPS but are not of currents and wind.

Firefighters rescue, resuscitate puppy

LA SHREVEPORT — Firefighters were able to resuscitate a seemingly lifeless pit bull puppy found during a house fire that left a family in Shreveport temporarily homeless.

The Times cited a Shreveport fire department news release that said crews were dispatched to the home Thursday evening after neighbors noticed smoke. Firefighters were alerted by the home owner, who arrived moments later, that the dog was possibly in the home.

The 3-month-old puppy was found motionless, behind a washing machine.

Fire crews administered oxygen for approximately 10 minutes

THE CENSUS

\$90M

The estimated value of four rare star rubies found in North Carolina that will go on auction in New York. The "Mountain Star Ruby Collection" weighs 342 carats collectively. Guernsey's, a New York-based auction house that provided the photo, said the late Jarvis Wayne Messer, of Buncombe County, discovered the stones in 1990. His family tried to sell the stones for 10 years, but with appraisals approaching \$100 million for the collection, there were few buyers.



COURTESY OF PAUL CYR/AP

On a carousel

A 427-foot-diameter ice carousel is shown Saturday on a lake in Sinclair, Maine. About 100 volunteers used augers to bore more than 1,300 holes, along with chain saws and other equipment to cut a circle in the 30-inch thick ice. Four outboard motors were used to get it rotating. Mike Cyr, one of the organizers, said the carousel is big enough to break the world record held by a town in Finland.

before the dog was able to stand on its own.

Parking violators can pay tickets with food

FL GAINESVILLE — When the University of Florida's president said on April Fools' Day that people cited for parking violations on campus over the past year could get amnesty by donating food, many thought it was a prank.

But on Friday, nearly 2,000 people learned it wasn't.

UF President W. Kent Fuchs said on Twitter that nearly 2,000 citations had been exchanged for 9,455 food donations.

The food will fill the shelves of the school's Field and Fork Pantry.

Police chief is pulled over, given a warning

AZ TUCSON — Police chief or not, that didn't stop a Tucson officer from giving his boss a warning during a traffic stop.

Tucson police Chief Chris Magnus was pulled over recently for a red-light infraction.

A recording of the March 26

traffic encounter shows the officer found his boss sitting in the driver's seat of a dark-colored SUV still in his uniform.

Magnus said he doesn't think the officer realized who he was until after he pulled him over.

The video shows Magnus repeatedly thanking the officer for doing his duty.

Man shot with arrow unsure if he was target

MI ALMENA TOWN-SHIP — A southwestern Michigan man who was shot in the neck with an arrow while searching for deer antlers says he's not sure if he was targeted or if the shooting was accidental.

Michael Downey told WMT-TV that after being shot March 25 he grabbed the arrow's shaft and "held it in place." He made it to his car and drove for help.

No arrests have been made as police continue to investigate the shooting in a remote area of Van Buren County's Almema Township.

Downey, 61, was wearing a hunting vest and said the arrow could have been shot carelessly by an inexperienced hunter.

Civil War artifacts stolen from museum

MO SEDALIA — Authorities said several thousand dollars worth of Civil War artifacts were stolen from a small Missouri museum.

Sedalia police said in a news release that a Pettis County Museum official told police that he tracked missing items, including a surgical kit, firearms and sword, to a Tennessee collector. The collector told police he had purchased the artifacts from a man who volunteered at the museum until fall 2017.

Police said the former volunteer confessed and that the case was turned over to prosecutors. The collector resold the artifacts, and police and the historical society are working to retrieve as many of them as possible.

Family dog turns up year after vanishing

NH HILL — A New Hampshire family was reunited with its dog almost a year after the pet went missing.

WMUR-TV reported the retriever named Beowulf disappeared in May when he got

spooked and ran into a wooded area in Hill.

The volunteer organization Granite State Dog Recovery received a call about Beowulf in January but he got away.

They eventually located Beowulf and were able to coax him with hot dogs and Meaty Marrow Bones. Granite State Dog Recovery said the hardy pooch had no signs of injury or frostbite.

Woman rescued shortly before train hits car

CO COLORADO SPRINGS — Two people helped rescue an elderly Colorado Springs woman from her car as it sat in the path of a train.

Colorado Springs Gazette marketing manager Brad Doll said a homeless woman flagged him down and asked him to help persuade the driver to get out of her car. Helga Rodgers told KKTV that she wanted to try to move the car off the tracks.

Doll was eventually able to get her into his car.

Doll said the train smashed into the stranded vehicle just seconds after he moved his car out of harm's way.

From wire reports

FACES

It's a MEAN WORLD

Fey: Online bullying makes 'Mean Girls' relevant today

By JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

Tina Fey had no idea "Mean Girls" would be timelier today than it was 14 years ago. And that makes her a little uneasy.

"It's just sort of unfortunate that it does," the Emmy-winning actress and writer said Sunday at the opening night party for her Broadway adaptation of the 2004 film "Mean Girls."

"When the movie was written, it was about relational aggression among girls. And now, everyone does that. The government does it. People are unkind. They don't respect each other's basic human dignity, and so social media is such a disease, right?" Fey said. "So it feels like it's an even more-timely reminder now that we all need to just kind of take a breath before we hurt each other."

Fey wrote the story for the show with her husband, Jeff Richmond, who composed the music. They were asked about the difference between the stage and film versions.

"The core message is the same, but I think nothing pulls it out like singing," Fey said.

Richmond said you can go to different emotional places through music. "There are other things in a musical that you can't dig into like you can in the movie. But I think this emotional thing, you certainly can," Richmond said.

Like the film, the musical tells the story of a teenage girl who grew up in Africa and ends up in a suburban U.S. high school. There she quickly learns the cruel nature of being popular. Though it's a comedy, it depicts clique mentalities and the negative effect that has on self-esteem.



Tina Fey
GREG ALLEN, INVISION/AP

'A Quiet Place' makes noisy box-office debut

Associated Press

John Krasinski's "A Quiet Place" made a thunderous debut at the box office, opening with \$50 million in ticket sales and rumbling to the year's second-best weekend after "Black Panther," according to studio estimates Sunday.

The Paramount Pictures thriller far exceeded expectations to land one of the top opening weekends for a horror release. It marks an unlikely breakthrough for the former "Office" actor. Krasinski's third directing effort, which stars himself and wife Emily Blunt, is about a family in a future dystopia populated by violent creatures with extremely acute hearing.

But it was far from the only success story on the weekend. The R-rated comedy "Blockers" opened solidly with \$21.4 million. Steven Spielberg's virtual-reality adventure "Ready Player One" dipped only 40 percent with \$25.1 million in its second weekend, and the period docudrama "Chappaquiddick" beat expectations with a debut of \$6.2 million.

Lawyer says actor Rush barely eating

Oscar-winning actor Geoffrey Rush has become virtually housebound, barely eats and wakes each morning with a "terrible sense of dread" since a Sydney newspaper alleged inappropriate behavior toward an actress, his lawyer swore in an affidavit.

Lawyer Nicholas Pullen's affidavit submitted to the Australian Federal Court in Sydney on Monday said the 66-year-old Australian actor had suffered "tremendous emotional and social hardship" since The Daily Telegraph accused him in December of inappropriate behavior toward actress Eryn Jean Norvill during the Sydney Theatre Company's production of "King Lear" in 2015.

Rush has denied the allegation. He is suing the newspaper over the articles.

Asher and Alexie books draw most complaints

Jay Asher's "Thirteen Reasons Why" and Sherman Alexie's "The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian" top the American Library Association's list of "challenged" books from 2017, those most objected to by parents and other community members. The list also includes Harper Lee's "To Kill a Mockingbird" and one of last year's top-selling young adult novels, Angie Thomas' "The Hate U Give."

Complaints about books range from the theme of suicide in "Thirteen Reasons Why" to profanity and sexual content in Alexie's book.

Other news

■ **Rapper Cardi B** revealed during a "Saturday Night Live" performance she's pregnant. Her fiancé is rapper Offset, of the hip-hop group Migos.

■ **Kate Hudson** and her musician boyfriend, Danny Fujikawa, popped black question mark balloons to let loose the pink in an Instagram reveal that their baby will be a girl. The actress didn't say when the baby is due. It's her third child and her first with Fujikawa.

■ **"Real Housewives of Atlanta"** cast member **Kenya Moore** is having a baby. The 47-year-old revealed the pregnancy Sunday during the show's reunion on Bravo. The former Miss USA is married to New York restaurateur Marc Daly.

■ **Federal agents** in Puerto Rico arrested reggaeton singer **Kendy Kaponi** on Monday on charges of armed burglary and assault in Florida stemming from an alleged incident on July 28.

■ **Chuck McCann**, the zany comic who hosted a children's television show in the 1960s before branching out as a character actor in films and TV, died Sunday in Los Angeles of congestive heart failure. He was 83.

'Miracle Season' cast says film highlights female empowerment

By NICOLE EVATT
Associated Press

Cast members of "The Miracle Season" say the film's female-empowerment message couldn't have come at a better time.

The movie follows the true story of Iowa City's West High volleyball team, which reached the state championships after the death of teammate Caroline "Line" Pound.

Erin Moriarty, one of the stars of the film, says the theme of women working together to achieve a goal is particularly important in the era of #MeToo, with women in Hollywood and elsewhere organizing to eradicate sexual misconduct.

"I feel like the movement with what's going on in Hollywood right now, in addition to this film, kind of really emphasizes the concept that if we're all in it together, life is going to be so much easier," said

Moriarty. "And we've got to assume these roles of strength that are equal to men."

Danka Yarosh, who also stars in the movie, is optimistic about workplace parity in Hollywood and beyond.

"I think a lot of Hollywood is going through a change right now, especially with representation," she said. "There's more females going into the workforce and being recognized, and I think that's really, really great, and I'm excited to see what this next year and the years after that will bring."

Helen Hunt, who plays the coach of the team, says the message behind the movie hit home after filming started in Vancouver, Canada.

"I didn't realize when I took the job what I was going to be doing on that level. I just thought the director (Sean McNamara) and I thought it seemed like a good part and would be a beautiful place to shoot. But I



Erin Moriarty, left, and Helen Hunt are two of the stars in "The Miracle Season."

remembered very clearly standing on this volleyball court, looking around at these beautiful souls staring at me like I'm sup-

posed to know what to say to them, and luckily a really good writer told me to say, 'I love you and recognize what you did and have joy.' It was pretty perfect," she said before a special screening in Los Angeles recently.

Hunt said her teenage daughter was inspired by spending time with the film's young stars. "Being around sweet, lovely women following what they want to do ... it was a beautiful way to spend a summer," she said.

Moriarty hopes "The Miracle Season" will open the door for more female-driven stories in Hollywood. "I don't like that this film is the anomaly right now — that we have this movie coming out about female athletes at such a young age and it's rare. But I'm happy that we're getting out there and I hope that this catalyzes more stories like that," said Moriarty.

"The Miracle Season" is now in theaters stateside.

SHIFTING GEARS



PHOTOS COURTESY OF GENERAL MOTORS/TNS

People mover

By G. CHAMBERS WILLIAMS III

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Chevrolet's cool-looking Z71 Midnight Edition package is offered on Tahoe and Suburban sport utilities, as well as on the Silverado pickups.

Over the past year, I've tested Silverado 1500 and Tahoe models with the Midnight package, and recently I also got to spend time in the Suburban version, which is 20.3 inches longer than the similarly equipped Tahoe.

The Suburban is Chevrolet's original sport utility vehicle, introduced in 1935 and a star of the Chevy lineup ever since — particularly in Texas, where it's among the most popular motor vehicles ever.

Like its siblings, the Suburban has great road presence, and is quite hard to ignore. That's made even more so by the Midnight Edition's jet-black exterior color, along with blacked wheels and body trim.

The Suburban essentially is the same vehicle as the Tahoe, except at the rear. The cargo compartment is extended, giving the Suburban 39.3 cubic feet of cargo space behind the third-row seat — 24 cubic feet more than the Tahoe, at 15.3 cubic feet.

The Tahoe/Suburban and its siblings received their last full makeover for 2015, and the Midnight Edition package was added a year later. It's also available on the Silverado Crew Cab pickup, which is almost the same vehicle underneath as the Suburban and Tahoe — it just has the cargo area turned into an open truck bed. The Silverado Midnight Edition has much the same look as the Suburban and Tahoe versions, with the same black wheels and trim.

Our Suburban tester was the four-wheel-drive LT trim level, with a base price

of \$58,280 (plus \$1,295 freight) before adding the Z71Midnight Edition Package (\$2,285). With the package came the 18-inch black-painted aluminum wheels, blackwall all-terrain tires, black tubular assist steps, black roof rack, tow hooks, underbody skid plate package, 3.42 rear axle ratio, Autotrac active two-speed transfer

case, hill-descent control, front and rear black Chevy bowties, Z71 grille decals, high-capacity air cleaner and Z71 rubber floor mats. The vehicle came with a black interior, too.

Our Suburban was powered by a 5.3-liter Ecotec3 V-8 engine with 355 horsepower and 383 foot-pounds of torque. It was paired with a six-speed automatic transmission, although Chevrolet now offers a 10-speed automatic with the optional 6.2-liter V-8.

With three rows of seats, the Suburban can carry up to eight passengers — two up front and three each in the middle and third rows. But our tester came with power second-row bucket seats (\$795), which replaced the second-row bench seat, and cut the passenger capacity to seven.

The 39.3-cubic-foot cargo area behind the third row is big enough for luggage and sports gear for a long family trip. With the third row folded, it expands to 76.7 cubic feet; and with middle and rear seats folded, there is 121.7 cubic feet of cargo space.

For 2018, Suburban prices begin at \$50,200 (plus freight) for the base rear-wheel-drive LS model. It's available with four-wheel drive at all trim levels. There is a rotary dial on the dash to the left of the steering column that has settings for 2WD, Automatic, 4WD High or 4WD Low, which is a low-range setting for serious off-road driving.

The Suburban is a very pleasant highway vehicle, with a quiet cabin, smooth ride and a more efficient powertrain than the previous generation.

It has a 31-gallon fuel tank, compared with 26 gallons for the Tahoe. EPA ratings for our four-wheel-drive tester were 15 mpg city/22 highway/18 combined. During our week in the Suburban, with about a 60-40 mix of highway-city driving, we aver-

aged just over 18 mpg.

There was plenty of power from the 5.3-liter engine, and with the four-wheel drive, the Suburban can tow trailers weighing up to 8,000 pounds.

To help boost fuel economy, the engine has technologies such as direct fuel injection, continuously variable valve timing and an advanced combustion system.

Among other suspension and mechanical features are a coil-over-shock front suspension, five-link/coil-spring rear suspension, a wide rear track, electric power steering and standard automatic-locking rear differential.

Included on all models is a four-wheel antilock disc-brake system featuring the GM Duraflex brake rotors, designed to last twice as long as conventional rotors.

For connectivity, the Suburban has a 4G LTE Hot Spot (built-in Wi-Fi) that's active when the ignition is on, allowing everyone in the vehicle to connect to the Web. Our vehicle also had GM's OnStar system and SiriusXM satellite radio.

We had a 12-volt DC and two USB ports in the cubby in front where there is a small open cubby perfect for portable devices; there is also a nifty hidden compartment behind the audio-nav touch screen, opened by a touch of a button below the screen, with a USB port inside. It's perfect for hiding away your smartphone. There were two USB ports, an auxiliary input and another 12-volt outlet inside the center console, which also doubled as an armrest for the driver and front passenger.

Safety features include front and rear automatic braking, which uses radar and ultrasonic sensors to help avoid low-speed collisions; GM's Safety Alert driver's seat; and a backup-camera system.

2018 Chevrolet Suburban LT Z71 Midnight Edition



Highs: A sturdy family hauler with lots of power, a smooth ride and a long list of standard and optional convenience and safety features

Lows: Can get pricey, especially with options.

Vehicle type: Full-size sport utility vehicle

Base price: \$60,565 (plus \$1,295 freight and options)

Price as tested: \$67,075 (including freight and options)

Powertrain: 5.3-liter V-8

Transmission: Six-speed automatic

Power/torque: 355 horsepower/383 foot-pounds

EPA fuel economy rating: 15 mpg city/22 highway/18 combined

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Child advocates ask FTC to investigate YouTube

WEDNESDAY IN THE PACIFIC

CHINA RUSSIA

N. KOREA S. KOREA JAPAN

Seoul 61/48
Osan 62/40
Busan 68/47
Sasebo 66/50
Okinawa 79/67
Iwakuni 67/51
Tokyo 67/63
Misawa 66/43
Guam 87/79

Pacific Ocean
Sea of Japan
Philippine Sea

The weather is provided by the American Forces Network Weather Center, 2nd Weather Squadron at Offutt Air Force Base, Neb.



Something for everyone...

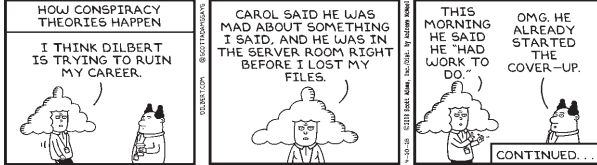
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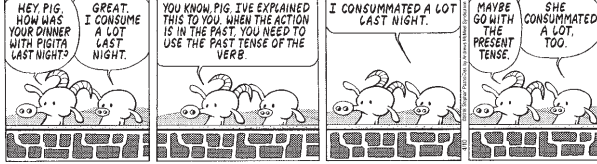
Frazz



Dilbert



Pearls Before Swine



Non Sequitur



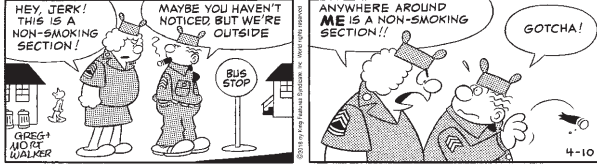
Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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ACROSS

- 1 Tag sale words
- 5 British rule of India
- 8 Bark
- 12 Grand
- 13 Sch. URL ender
- 14 Botanical angle
- 15 Elvis hit
- 17 Actress Ward
- 18 "Mayday!"
- 19 Port city of Poland
- 21 Memento
- 24 Thick chunk
- 25 Final notice
- 26 Spicy stadium frank
- 30 Fib
- 31 Frontiersman Daniel
- 32 GI's address

DOWN

- 1 Sports fig.
- 2 HBO competitor
- 3 Debtor's note
- 4 Twilight team
- 5 Cincinnati apple
- 6 Hubbub
- 7 Multitasking, maybe
- 8 Sushi condiment
- 9 They can
- 10 Fixes a squeak
- 11 Criticism
- 16 Mafia boss
- 20 Valley
- 21 Snitched
- 22 Theater award
- 23 Chicken —
- 24 Trembled
- 26 Spy's moniker
- 27 Miami — County
- 28 Store sign
- 29 Capricorn
- 31 Huffed and puffed
- 34 "Leave that to me!"
- 35 Big lizard
- 37 German cry
- 38 Cuts the grass
- 39 Hedgepodge
- 40 Squabble
- 41 Apple tablet
- 44 Like Abner
- 45 Homer's cry
- 46 Poetic tribute
- 47 Tiara sparkler

Answer to Previous Puzzle

M	E	L	G	R	A	S	S	C	O	B
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C	O	L	L	O	Q	U	I	A	L	A
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I	N	C	I	T	E	T	N	A		
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4-10

CRYPTOQUIP

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Automotive 140**SELLER BEWARE**

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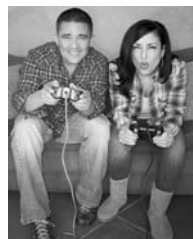
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SCOREBOARD

Sports

on AFN

Go to the American Forces Network website for the most up-to-date TV schedules. myafn.net

Deals

Sunday's transactions

BASEBALL
AMERICAN LEAGUE
BALTIMORE ORIOLES — Recalled LHP Tanner Scott from Norfolk (IL).
DETROIT TIGERS — Options RHP Walker Saup from Norfolk (IL).
BOSTON RED SOX — Options RHP Marco Maldonado from Norfolk (IL).
REINTEGRATED LHP Eduardo Rodriguez from Norfolk (IL).
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REINTEGRATED LHP Eduardo Rodriguez from Norfolk (IL).

Pro soccer

MLS

Eastern Conference	W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
New York City FC	4	1	0	12	13	6
Atlanta United FC	4	1	0	12	13	6
New England	3	2	1	10	10	6
Orlando City	3	2	1	10	7	10
LA Galaxy	3	2	1	10	10	6
Montreal	3	2	0	6	5	9
Philadelphia	3	2	0	6	5	9
San Jose	3	2	0	6	5	9
Toronto FC	3	2	0	6	5	9
Chicago	3	2	0	6	5	9

Western Conference

W	L	T	Pts	GF	GA
Portland	4	1	1	13	9
LA Galaxy	3	2	1	10	8
Real Salt Lake	3	2	1	7	10
LA Galaxy	3	2	1	7	10
Minnesota United	3	2	0	6	6
FC Dallas	3	2	0	6	6
LA Galaxy	3	2	0	6	6
Houston	3	2	0	6	6
Portland	3	2	0	6	6
Portland	3	2	0	6	6

NOTE: Three points for victory, one point for tie.

Friday, April 6

New England 4, Montreal 0

Saturday, April 7

Atlanta United FC 5, Los Angeles FC 1

San Jose 1, Philadelphia 1, tie

Real Salt Lake 2, Vancouver 1

Sunday, April 8

Orlando City 3, Portland 1

Portland City 2, LA Galaxy 0

Wednesday, April 11

Real Salt Lake at New York City FC

Friday, April 13

LA Galaxy at Los Angeles FC

Saturday, April 14

Montreal at Toronto FC

Toronto FC at Colorado

LA Galaxy at Columbus at D.C. United

Dallas at New England

Minnesota United at Portland

Sunday, April 15

Seattle at Sporting Kansas City

New York City FC at Atlanta United FC

LA Galaxy at Portland

LA Galaxy at Portland

LA Galaxy at Portland

LA Galaxy at Portland

LA Galaxy at Portland

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Tennis

Davis Cup

WORLD GROUP

Quarterfinals

Winners to semifinals, Sept. 14-16

France 3, Italy 1

At Valletta Cambiaso ASD

Surface: Clay-Outdoor

Singles

Lucas Pouille, France, def. Andreas Seppi, Italy, 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 3-6, 6-1.

Flavia Pennetta, Italy, def. Flavia Pennetta, France, 6-2, 6-2, 6-3.

Doubles

Pierre-Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Pietrangeli, France, def. Simone Bolelli and Fabio Fognini, Italy, 6-1, 6-3, 6-1.

Reverse Singles

Lucas Pouille, France, def. Fabio Fognini, Italy, 6-1, 6-2, 6-3.

Spain 3, Germany 2

At Plaza de Toros de Valencia

Surface: Clay-Outdoor

Singles

Alexander Zverev, Germany, def. David Ferrer, Spain, 6-4, 6-2, 6-2.

Rafael Nadal, Spain, def. Philipp Kohlschreiber, Germany, 6-2, 6-3, 6-3.

Doubles

Tim Puetz and Philipp Kohlschreiber, Germany, def. Feliciano Lopez and Marcel Granollers, Spain, 6-1, 6-2, 6-3.

Reverse Singles

Rafael Nadal, Spain, def. Alexander Zverev, Germany, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4.

David Ferrer, Spain, def. Philipp Kohlschreiber, Germany, 7-6 (5), 3-6, 7-6 (5), 4-6, 7-5.

Croatia 3, Kazakhstan 1

At Varazdin

Surface: Clay-Outdoor

Singles

Marin Cilic, Croatia, def. Dmitry Popko, Kazakhstan, 6-2, 6-4, 6-3.

Mikhail Kukushkin, Kazakhstan, def. Borna Coric, Croatia, 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4, 6-2.

Doubles

Urogs Bogdan and Nikola Meketic, Croatia, def. Timur Khabibov and Aleksandr Nedovysov, Kazakhstan, 6-7 (2), 6-4, 6-4, 6-2.

Reverse Singles

Marin Cilic, Croatia, def. Mikhail Kukushkin, Kazakhstan, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4.

Borna Coric, Croatia, vs. Dmitry Popko, Kazakhstan, abandoned.

Unlabeled, Belgium 0

At Curb Event Center

Doubles

John Isner, United States, def. Boris De Zeeuw, Belgium, 6-3, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Sam Querrey, United States, def. Ben Belmelians, Belgium, 6-1, 7-6 (5), 7-5.

Doubles

Harrison Harrison and Jack Scott, United States, def. Sander Gille and Johan Verbeke, Belgium, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (5), 6-4.

Reverse Singles

Harrison Harrison and Jack Scott, United States, def. Sander Gille and Johan Verbeke, Belgium, 6-3, 6-4.

Sam Querrey, United States, vs. Boris De Zeeuw, Belgium, abandoned.

Playoffs

Promotion

Kuwait 2, Malaysia 0

Vietnam 3, Qatar 0

Relocation

Saudi Arabia 0, United Arab Emirates 0

Pacific Oceania 2, Jordan 1

Family Cup Open

Sunday

The Volvo Tennis Center

Charleston, South Carolina

Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Singles

Kiki Bertens (2), Netherlands, def. Madison Keys (7), United States, 6-4, 6-7 (2), 7-6 (5).

Julia Goerges (5), Germany, def. Anastasiya Sevastova (8), Latvia, 7-6 (5), 6-3.

Kiki Bertens (12), Netherlands, def. Julia Goerges (5), Germany, 7-6 (5), 6-3.

Doubles

Alla Kudryavtseva (3), Russia, and Katarina Srebotnik (5), Slovenia, def. Kateryna Bondarenko (4), Ukraine, and Aleksandra Krunic (5), Spain, 7-5, 6-2.

Final

Alla Kudryavtseva (3), Russia, and Katarina Srebotnik (5), Slovenia, def. Andreja Klepac (4), Slovenia, and Julia Goerges (5), Germany, 6-3, 6-3.

Abierto GNP Seguros

Clay Sonoma

Monterrey, Mexico

Surface: Hard-Outdoor

Singles

Garbine Muguriza (1), Spain, def. Timea Bacsinszky (4), Hungary, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Final

Garbine Muguriza (1), Spain, def. Timea Bacsinszky (4), Hungary, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3.

Naomi Broady (4), Britain, and Sara Sorribes Tormo (5), Spain, def. Esrae Krawiec (3), United States, and Giuliana Olmos (3), Mexico, 6-3, 6-4, 10-8.

Auto racing

O'Reilly Auto Parts 500

NASCAR Monday Night

Sunday

At Texas Motor Speedway

Fort Worth, Texas

Start position: 150 miles

(1) Kyle Busch, Toyota, 334, 45 laps.

(2) Kevin Harvick, Ford, 334, 45 laps.

(3) Jamie McMurray, Chevrolet, 334, 45 laps.

(4) Daniel Ricciardo, Toyota, 334, 45 laps.

(5) Ryan Blaney, Ford, 334, 45 laps.

(6) Joey Logano, Ford, 334, 45 laps.

(7) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 334, 45 laps.

(8) Denny Hamlin, Toyota, 334, 45 laps.

(9) Clint Bowyer, Ford, 334, 45 laps.

(10) William Byron, Chevrolet, 334, 45 laps.

(11) Chase Elliott, Chevrolet, 334, 45 laps.

(12) Trevor Bayne, Ford, 333, 0, 25.

(13) Ty Dillon, Chevrolet, 332, 0, 24.

(14) Michael McDowell, Ford, 332, 0, 23.

(15) Chris Buescher, Chevrolet, 331, 0, 22.

(16) Matt DiBenedetto, Ford, 329, 0, 21.

(17) Kasey Kahne, Chevrolet, 328, 0, 20.

(18) Ross Chastain, Chevrolet, 325, 0, 19.

(19) Cole Whitt, Chevrolet, 324, 0, 18.

(20) Gray Gaulding, Toyota, 322, 0, 17.

(21) Brandon Jones, Chevrolet, 321, 0, 16.

(22) Harrison Rhodes, Chevrolet, 319, 0, 15.

(23) David Ragan, Ford, 317, 0, 14.

(24) AJ Allmendinger, Chevrolet, 316, 0, 13.

(25) Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Ford, suspension, 315, 0, 12.

(26) Austin Dillon, Chevrolet, 304, 0, 11.

(27) Jimmie Johnson, Chevrolet, accident, 303, 0, 10.

(28) Alex Bowman, Chevrolet, 294, 0, 9.

(29) Daniel Suarez, Toyota, 290, 0, 8.

(30) Paul Menard, Ford, accident, 215, 0, 7.

(31) Brad Keselowski, Ford, accident, 178, 0, 1.

(32) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(33) Brad Keselowski, Ford, accident, 178, 0, 1.

(34) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(35) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(36) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(37) Martin Truex Jr., Toyota, accident, 126, 0, 1.

(38) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(39) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(40) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(41) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(42) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(43) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(44) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(45) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(46) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(47) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

(48) Tony Danz, Chevrolet, 177, 0, 1.

AUTO RACING



LUCA BRUNO/AP

Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel celebrates after winning the Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix on Sunday in Sakhir, Bahrain.

Vettel wins in Bahrain

Associated Press

SAKHIR, Bahrain — Sebastian Vettel just held on to win a dramatic Bahrain Grand Prix from pole position on Sunday, while his Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen accidentally broke a team mechanic's leg after a botched tire change cost him a podium spot.

Lewis Hamilton profited from Ferrari's mishap to finish third behind his Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas. Both Red Bulls failed, with Max Verstappen retiring moments after Daniel Ricciardo, facilitating Hamilton's transition from ninth on the grid to the podium.

It could have been even better for Mercedes.

Bottas almost overtook Vettel on the last lap, but Vettel made a crucial blocking move and won by only 0.6 seconds. It was the fourth F1 championship's 49th career win on his 200th race start.

Vettel followed up his win at the season-opening Australian GP two weeks ago by staging a nerve-wracking rearguard. Although the German driver looked steady behind the wheel, his mind was racing almost as fast as Bottas' Mercedes behind him.

"I was doing the maths in the car: 10 laps to go, with that pace he's going to catch me," a relieved Vettel said. "I just barely tried to keep it as clean as possible."

Ferrari totally botched Raikkonen's second tire change. A rear wheel was not fitted properly and, in his haste to get back into the race, Raikkonen's car ran over and broke a mechanic's leg leg.

Francesco Cigarini wrote on Instagram he was OK after surgery.

By STEPHEN HAWKINS
Associated Press

FORT WORTH, Texas — Kyle Busch's return to Victory Lane only 10 races after his last win just seemed to take much longer. There were all those runner-up finishes in between, one in particular.

A runner-up finish in the 2017 season finale kept Busch from winning another NASCAR Cup Series championship, something he had to contemplate the entire offseason. Then he had three runner-up finishes in the first six races this year, including two that Kevin Harvick won.

On Sunday at Texas Motor Speedway, points leader Busch finished ahead of Harvick and the rest of the field for Joe Gibbs Racing's first victory this season.

"Certainly being that close, it gets a little old a little faster," Busch said. "If you're finishing fifth or 10th or whatever, and you're just not capable of winning, it certainly will draw longer as well too. ... Being as close as you are, that kind hurts a little bit more, especially that final one, that Homestead one."

Busch stayed in front of Harvick the last 24 laps after the final restart, getting his third win at Texas and 44th of his career. The No. 18 Toyota led 116 of the 334 laps at the 1½-mile track.

"They were probably just a tick faster overall, but I just had to make sure to do everything I could to hit all my marks and everything to focus on making sure that I did the right things to block his air a little bit," Busch said. Jamie McMurray finished third, ahead of Erik Jones. Ryan Blaney was fifth a day after winning the Xfinity Series race.

Since finishing 25th in the season opener at Daytona, Busch has been in the top seven the last six races.

"We just been on a roll of finishing really good and getting really pumped and excited about that and the momentum we were able to carry, but frustrated at the same time trying to get to Victory Lane," he said.

Harvick, who won at Texas in November, led 87 of the first 129 laps and won the first stage. But he



RANDY HOLT/AP

Kyle Busch celebrates his win in Sunday's NASCAR Cup series race in Fort Worth, Texas.

had issues on pit road, including a strange incident during a caution when a lugnut popped loose and into the jack. He dropped from first to ninth on that stop, then had to come back in a few laps later because of a loose wheel.

There was another stop when Harvick, who dropped back as far as 27th place and a lap behind the leader, got a penalty for an extra man over the wall when a tire got loose in the pit.

"We did overcome a lot. ... We had a pathetic day on pit road, two days on pit road, because of pit guns," Harvick said. "When you have a pit gun problem like we have multiple times and been able to overcome it and then today we couldn't overcome it. Time after time you can't get the lug nuts tight because the pit guns don't work."

A different 1.5 winner: Harvick and reigning Cup Series champion Martin Truex Jr. had won the previous eight Cup races on 1½-mile tracks.

Truex had won five and Harvick the other three, including the first two this season.

But Truex wasn't even around for the finish of this one. The first 85-lap stage ended under caution after a front right tire blew on his

No. 78 Toyota, which shot up the track and slammed hard into the outer wall. Truex, second to Harvick at the time, finished last in the 37-car field.

"Just blew a right-front tire out of nowhere. Not sure what happened there," Truex said. "All in all we were going to be in for a good day. We were making the car better and still had room to go. We were as fast as anybody. At least that's a positive."

Top 10 for SHS with top 3: Kurt Busch, the pole sitter, finished seventh. Stewart-Haas Racing had the top three starters in a race for the first time with Harvick, Busch and Clint Bowyer, and all finished their Fords in the top 10. Bowyer, coming off a win two weeks ago at Martinsville to end his 190-race winless streak, was ninth.

Champ's streak turns 30: Jimmie Johnson's career-long winless streak reached 30 races after the seven-time Cup Series champion was taken out in a seven-car incident.

Johnson, who has a record seven Cup wins at Texas, was running in the middle of the pack when he was caught in the melee on the first lap after the restart

following the completion of the second stage. Denny Hamlin got loose and spun in front of Johnson, who has 83 career wins but hasn't been to Victory Lane since Dover last June.

"Unfortunately circumstances, but a lot to build on from this weekend. A strong Friday, a fantastic Saturday and then not the best Sunday," Johnson said. "We are getting closer each and every week. ... We will get back to our winning ways soon."

Others cars involved were Brad Keselowski, Austin Dillon, Trevor Bayne, Aric Almirola and David Ragan.

Top 10 rookies: Bubba Wallace and William Byron, the two rookies in the series, both finished in the top 10.

Wallace was eighth, the first time he's been better than 20th since a runner-up finish at the Daytona 500 in the season opener. Byron was 10th for his first top-10 finish.

Up next: The series is back to short-track racing next Sunday at the half-mile Bristol Motor Speedway, where Johnson and Kyle Busch both won races last year. Johnson won in the spring and Busch in the fall night race.

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MLB

Ace Ohtani flirts with perfect game in win

By GREG BEACHAM
Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Shohei Ohtani seemed to be the only person in Angel Stadium who wasn't incredibly impressed while he mowed down the Oakland Athletics' first 19 batters in order.

But when Ohtani finally yielded a hit and then struck out Matt Olson with two runners on to end the seventh inning, he gave a fist pump and a celebratory scream at the ground while the crowd rose for a standing ovation.

Even the two-way Japanese sensation realized his first home pitching start was a thrilling moment in his increasingly incredible rookie season.

Ohtani threw seven shutout innings of one-hit ball in his home debut on the mound, propelling the Los Angeles Angels to a 6-1 victory Sunday.

Marcus Semien's clean one-out single to left broke up Ohtani's bid for a perfect game, but he finished the inning with his 12th strikeout. Mixing 99 mph fastballs with precipitous breaking pitches and tremendous professional cool, Ohtani (2-0) was too much for Oakland — until the seventh, when he showed resilience, too.

"I wanted to keep a clean zero on the



JAE C. HONG/AP

Angels starting pitcher Shohei Ohtani took a bid for a perfect game into the seventh inning against the A's on Sunday.

board," Ohtani said. "One hit would [mean] two runs, and it's a huge difference. I wanted that strikeout, and I got it."

Ohtani struck out the side twice during the latest feat in a series of early season superlatives by the 23-year-old prodigy.

His own pitching debut in Oakland last

weekend with six strong innings, and he homered in three consecutive games in Anaheim between starts in his attempt to become the first regular two-way player in decades.

"Especially with how my spring training went, I wasn't really imagining (the start of the season) to be this good, to be honest," Ohtani said. "I feel better every day. I feel like I'm getting used to everything more and more each day. But it's just the first week."

He was sharp from the beginning on a gorgeous day in Orange County, striking out the side in the first inning on 15 pitches. Ohtani struck out the side again in the fifth inning, and he fanned every Oakland batter except Jonathan Lucroy at least once.

"He got off to a good start, the crowd got into it [and] he got a little bit of a generous strike zone, all of that," Oakland manager Bob Melvin said. "But the bottom line is he pitched really well."

Jed Lowrie drew a four-pitch walk after Semien's single, but Ohtani ended the threat by inducing Khris Davis' weak groundout before fanning Olson. He left the mound to the last of several standing ovations from his enthralled new fans in the sellout crowd — an unheard-of gather-

ing at Angel Stadium in April.

"It's a rare kind of talent to do it both ways, and it's great to watch," Angels second baseman Zack Cozart said. "It didn't look like [the A's] had a chance up there, the way he was throwing."

Teammate Ian Kinsler snickered while Cozart added: "People thought he should be in the minor leagues, apparently, to start the year."

Mike Trout and Ryan Schimpf homered, and Albert Pujols had an RBI double in the Angels' seventh win in nine games.

Kendall Graveman (0-2) gave up five hits and four walks while failing to get out of the fourth inning for the A's, who have lost seven of 10. Matt Joyce homered in the ninth.

Trout connects: Trout scored his 700th run in the first inning on Pujols' double down the left-field line. Trout joined a club of nine players in baseball history, including Pujols, who had 200 homers and 700 runs scored before their age-27 season.

Trout hit a long homer over the ficus trees in center field in the third inning, snapping an 0-for-15 skid on Los Angeles' homestand. The two-time AL MVP added a bloop RBI single in the fourth to chase Graveman.

Roundup

Diamondbacks top Cardinals after benches clear

Associated Press

ST. LOUIS — Torey Lovullo claimed his Arizona Diamondbacks were being framed.

The manager set off a benches-clearing incident in his team's 4-1 win over the St. Louis Cardinals on Sunday by maintaining eight-time All-Star catcher Yadier Molina was earning unwarranted strike calls.

"I don't want to say he is getting more than anyone else, because it's part of the game," Lovullo said. "I have the utmost respect for Yadier Molina. He's one of the best catchers the game has ever seen. It was more of me saying, I respect him on that level, that he's getting special things because he's that good. That's where I was coming from."

Lovullo was ejected by plate umpire Tim Timmons in the second inning. Lovullo was arguing a called third strike on A.J. Pollock and got into a shouting match with Molina. The catcher appeared to lunge at Lovullo and made contact as players ran onto the field.

St. Louis manager Mike Matheny stepped between Molina and Lovullo.

Lovullo had shown displeasure on a strike three call to David Peralta in the first inning, then went to the umpire after the call against Pollock.

"I used a poor choice of words and he (Molina) took offense to it," Lovullo said. "I wish I could take back what I said. It really wasn't directed at him. I was just frustrated over what I was watching."

Molina remained upset after the game.

"He said a bad word to me and

I reacted that way," Molina said. "He called me (it) twice. You can't allow that."

Timmons explained what he saw and heard to media.

"So when Lovullo got to me after I had ejected him, he made a comment that was aggressive that Yadi overheard, so that's why Yadi reacted the way that he did," the umpire said. "I think at that point Yadi became agitated, which was understandable. [The contact] was just incidental."

Pollock was walking back to the dugout at the time.

"I never thought someone arguing a third strike call was going to create a benches-clearing brawl," Pollock said. "But we stuck together as a team. We all have Torey's back."

Peralta hit a tiebreaking, two-run homer off Dominic Leone in the eighth, and Pollock went deep later in the inning. In his second year in charge, Lovullo got his 100th win and was given a post-game beer shower by his coaches.

Mets 6, Nationals 5 (12): Yoenis Cespedes scored Juan Lagares with a broken-bat single in the 12th inning to help visiting New York complete a three-game sweep.

Lagares singled off Brandon Kintzler (0-2) to lead off the inning and was sacrificed to second by Amed Rosario. Washington intentionally walked Michael Conforto, and then Cespedes — hitless in five previous at-bats with three strikeouts — splintered his bat on a soft line drive to center field.

Bryce Harper hit his major league-leading sixth home run, singled twice and walked twice.

Marlins 6, Phillies 3: Jake Ar-

rieta (0-1) lasted just four innings in his Philadelphia debut, allowing three runs — two earned — and three hits while striking out five. The 2015 NL Cy Young Award winner with the Cubs joined the Phillies a month into spring training, signing a \$75 million, three-year deal that could be worth up to \$135 million over five seasons.

Red Sox 8, Rays 7: Boston's Xander Bogaerts left with a left ankle injury in the seventh inning. The shortstop got hurt while sliding down into the visiting Tampa Bay dugout and was to have tests Monday.

Andrew Benintendi hit a tiebreaking RBI double in Boston's wild six-run eighth inning, and the Red Sox won their eighth straight.

Orioles 8, Yankees 7: Brad Brach escaped his own bases-loaded, no-out jam in the 12th inning, getting his second save when Aaron Judge grounded into a rare pitcher-to-catcher-to-third double play and striking out Giancarlo Stanton.

Baltimore overcame a 5-0, first-inning deficit to take three of four in New York following a five-game losing streak.

Indians 3, Royals 1: Yan Gomes hit a tiebreaking two-run homer off Brandon Maurer (0-2) in the ninth inning for Cleveland.

The game-time temperature was 32 degrees, the lowest in the 25-year history of the ballpark.

Tigers 1, White Sox 0: Mike Fiers combined with four relievers on a three-hitter that completed a three-game sweep for visiting Detroit.

On an afternoon with a first-pitch temperature of 36 degrees



JEFF ROBERSON/AP

Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina, right, is held back by the Diamondbacks' Daniel Descalso (3) and Alex Avila (5) as he yells at Diamondbacks manager Torey Lovullo, left, during the second inning Sunday in St. Louis. Lovullo set off the benches-clearing incident.

and a 10 mph wind blowing straight in, the teams combined for just five hits — all singles — and none after the third inning.

Astros 4, Padres 1: Max Stassi hit a three-run homer off Tyson Ross (1-1), Charlie Morton (2-0) allowed four hits and three walks for one unearned run in six innings for lost Houston.

The 52-degree temperature with the open roof for the first pitch was the coolest in the ballpark's history, beating 57 degrees, on April 8, 2007.

Cubs 3, Brewers 0: Jose Quintana (1-1) three-hit ball over six innings, Ben Zobrist homered and host Chicago finished 5-4 on its longest opening trip since going 7-5 in 1899.

Pirates 5, Reds 0: Jameson

Tailon (2-0) pitched a one-hitter for his first shutout in five major league starts, allowing Tyler Mahle's single to center with one out in the third. He struck out seven and walked two at home.

Blue Jays 7, Rangers 4: Steve Pearce homered on the first pitch of the game from Cole Hamels (1-2), and Kendrys Morales added a three-run shot in the first inning for visiting Toronto.

Dodgers 2, Giants 1: Cody Bellinger overcame food poisoning to score the go-ahead run on Kyle Farmer's pinch-hit double in the 10th inning off Pierce Johnson (0-1) at San Francisco.

Braves 4, Rockies 0: Sean Newberry (1-1) allowed three hits in the first inning before retiring the next 16 batters.

Calendar

April 11-14 — Portsmouth (Va.) Invitational Tournament.

April 11 — Regular season ends.

April 14 — Playoffs begin.

April 22 — Early entry eligibility deadline for NBA draft (11:59 p.m. EDT).

May 31 — NBA Finals begin.

June 11 — Early entry withdrawal deadline for NBA Draft (5 p.m. EDT).

June 17 — NBA Finals latest possible date.

June 21 — NBA Draft.

SPORTS BRIEFS/MASTERS



This booking photo provided Tuesday by the San Francisco Police Department shows former Oakland Raiders and San Francisco 49ers player Aldon Smith. Smith is back in a California jail after violating a condition of his bail.

Police: Smith violated monitoring conditions

SAN FRANCISCO — Authorities say former Oakland Raiders and San Francisco 49ers player Aldon Smith is back in a California jail after violating a condition of his bail.

Online records show the 28-year-old Smith is being held Sunday in San Francisco County Jail on \$500,000 bond. A message seeking comment from his attorney, Joshua Bentley, was not immediately returned.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Nancy Crowley tells the San Francisco Chronicle that Smith was booked Friday for violating a condition of his electronic monitoring while on bail.

Last month, Smith pleaded not guilty to domestic violence and other charges. A judge issued a protective order prohibiting him from contacting the victim. He later surrendered to police on charges he violated the restraining order.

The Raiders released the linebacker after his arrest on the domestic violence charges.

Cubs postpone home opener due to snow

CHICAGO — The Chicago Cubs tried to play their home opener on Monday. It was just a snow-day.

The Cubs' game against the Pittsburgh Pirates was postponed a day because of persistent snow that covered much of Wrigley Field, creating a scene more reminiscent of December than April.

The Cubs tried pushing back the scheduled start time by an hour, and workers used hand-held blowers to melt the snow on the tarp. But the accumulation and cold temperatures were just too much to overcome.

The game was rescheduled for 1:20 p.m. Tuesday, which was previously an off day for the first series between the NL Central rivals.

Chicago is the last major league team to hold its home opener. It opened the season with a 5-4 road trip to Miami, Cincinnati and Milwaukee.

— Associated Press

Commentary

This loss might hurt even more for Rory

McIlroy still chasing green jacket

By TIM DAHLBERG
Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga. — It wasn't the collapse from seven years earlier, far from it.

The way things unfolded for Rory McIlroy on Sunday at the Masters, though, it may end up hurting even more.

History was at stake, along with the green jacket. If McIlroy could bring it home in the final pairing with Patrick Reed he would become only the sixth man to complete the career Grand Slam, joining names that will long live in golfing lore.

But once again McIlroy's putter cooled off and he fell flat when it mattered most.

And once again he was left standing alongside the 18th green while another player celebrated a Masters win.

He was so close that he had a short eagle putt that could have tied him for the lead on the second hole. But after missing it he never really looked the same again.

"It wasn't as if nerves got to me," McIlroy insisted. "I just didn't quite have it."

By the time McIlroy's day mercifully ended, the bounce in his step was gone, replaced by a dejected look and slumping shoulders. He signed for a 2-over 74 that left him tied for fifth, six shots back.

It also left him shaking his head, trying to figure out why it all went so bad.

"Of course it's frustrating," McIlroy said. "It's hard to take any positives from it right now, but at least I put myself in the position. I didn't quite do enough. But, you know, come back again next year and try."

If it wasn't 2011, it was another huge opportunity frittered away. McIlroy didn't blow a four-shot lead in the final round like he did then, but he did blow another huge opportunity.

A day earlier he shot 65 and issued a veiled warning to Reed that three shots was nothing on a Sunday afternoon at the Masters. He said he couldn't wait to tee it up in the final group.

"It's the last round of a major championship, and we're both going for..." McIlroy said, clearly confident after his third round.

"Patrick is going for his first and I'm going for something else. It's going to be good fun."

It turned out to be no fun for McIlroy. It was Reed, who would handle the pressure for his first major win, not the Irish player with four major titles already in his display case.

"I played some great golf yesterday," McIlroy said. "I just didn't continue that golf into today."

The matchup of Reed and McIlroy in the final group had drawn comparisons to their Ryder Cup match at Hazeltine in 2016, when they traded birdie after birdie before Reed walked off with a 1-up win. Unlike that showdown, where Reed was backed by a huge crowd chanting "USA, USA," McIlroy was the favorite among the final day crowd.

Reed didn't mind that because he thought it was McIlroy who would be feeling the heat, not him.

"Honestly, I felt like a lot of that pressure was kind of lifted and kind of taken off of me," Reed said. "The fans, yes, were cheering for me, but some of them were cheering more for Rory. At the same time, you had a lot of the guys picking him to win over me, and it's just kind of one of those things that the more kind of chatter you have in your ear and about expectations and everything, the harder it is to play golf."

It looked hard for McIlroy, who pushed his opening tee shot deep into the trees and made several unforced errors. Mostly, though, it was the putter that let him down as he missed five putts within 10 feet.



DAVID GOLDMAN/AP

Rory McIlroy reacts after missing a putt on the 13th hole during the fourth round of the Masters on Sunday. McIlroy finished 2-over 74, tied for fifth place.

And when the putts don't fall on the final day, there's not a lot of excuses that can be made.

"I feel like momentum is a huge thing, especially in final rounds," McIlroy said. "You look at what Jordan (Spieth) and Rickie (Fowler) did. They got on a roll and I didn't. Patrick and I didn't at all. We were both around even par, and just sort of grinding out there. And it wasn't quite what we both had in mind. He just hung in there a little bit better than I did and got the job done."

It won't destroy his career because McIlroy is way too talented to allow that. But it will

likely damage his psyche.

A player has only so many chances to win the Masters, after all, no matter how good he is. And McIlroy has now let not just one, but two, Masters get away from him in the final group.

Still, he said, he sees himself wearing a green jacket one day.

"Oh, yeah, 100 percent," he said. "I've played in two final groups in the last seven years, I've had five top 10s. I play this golf course well."

"I just haven't played it well enough at the right time."

Tiger improves in final round

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Tiger Woods nearly ached a hole and made his lone eagle of the week.

The four-time Masters champion somewhat returned to form at Augusta National. It was just a few days too late to be more than an afterthought at golf's first major.

Woods closed with a flurry, recording a 3-under 69 in the final round at the Masters. He finished 1 over for the tournament, 16 strokes behind winner Patrick Reed and in a four-way tie for 32nd.

It was far from what the 42-year-old Woods wanted, but he left the hallowed grounds feeling better about his game than he did a few days before and more encouraged than his last few trips to Augusta National.

Woods last played the event in 2015. He returned the last two years for the champions' dinner, but didn't get on the course. The hiatus left him feeling nostalgic during his walk to the 18th green.

"This is one of the greatest walks in all of golf," Woods said afterward. "And I had missed it for

the last couple of years. ... Best (event) in all of our sport."

Woods started the weekend more than a dozen shots out of the lead and knew he would need something special to happen to get back in contention. It never happened. Never even came close, either.

But there were some glimpses Sunday in his traditional red shirt.

Woods had two birdies and an eagle on the back and looked like he would get to even par for the event. He lamented his iron play for the fourth straight day and loathed the three putts, including one for bogey on No. 18.

"Another lousy day with the irons," he said. "And I putted awful. It was possibly the highest score I could have shot today. All in all, a bitter-sweet ending."

Woods is assured of moving back into the top 100 in the world, notable only because he was at No. 1,199 just over four months ago when he returned to end yet another long layoff following a fourth back surgery.

Woods plans to take some time off in April, maybe even putting the clubs in the closet for a few weeks to "kind of get away for a while."

— Associated Press



Woods

MASTERS

Fowler, Spieth come up short at Augusta

By PAUL NEWBERY
Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Georgia — After the final putt disappeared into the cup, Rickie Fowler waited outside the scoring room at Augusta National.

Once again, he was congratulating someone else on winning their first major championship.

For Fowler, the wait goes on. "I was ready to go win," he said. "Unfortunately, I was one shot short."

This has become a familiar lament for Fowler, who hugs around the unwanted baggage as the best player without a title in one of golf's biggest events.

He had his best chance yet on a stirring Sunday at the Masters, making six birdies over the final 11 holes — including an 8-footer at the 72nd hole that finished off a 14-under 274.

Reed earned it, who would've been good enough to win most years.

But Patrick Reed had one less stroke on his card, claiming the green jacket by sinking a short but tussy par putt at No. 18.

"Gladiolus at least made the last one to make him earn it," Fowler said.

Jordan Spieth did his part, too, to make Reed earn it.

The Texan turned in one of the greatest closing rounds in Masters history, shooting an 8-under 64 that pushed him into the mix after he started the day with a daunting nine-shot deficit.

Spieth thought it would be a nice, stress-



CHRIS CARLSON/AP

Jordan Spieth hits on the fourth hole on Sunday at the Masters in Augusta, Ga. Spieth turned in one of the greatest closing rounds in Masters history, shooting an 8-under 64 that pushed him into the mix after starting the day with a daunting nine-shot deficit.

free day out on the course.

Instead, he horned his way into one of the greatest duels this place has ever seen, actually grabbing a share of the lead by sinking a 35-foot birdie putt at the 16th hole.

"Are you kidding me?" Spieth mouthed to his caddy.

Reed, playing in the final group, answered with a birdie at the 14th.

Spieth's hopes ended at the 18th hole after his tee shot clipped a tree, falling to the ground just 177 yards away. He pulled off two dazzling shots to give himself a shot at saving par. But an 8-foot putt slid

by the edge of the hole — his only bogey of the day.

"I was pretty gutted at the finish," Spieth said. "I hit a tee shot that wasn't that bad. It just caught the last little branch of that tree. Obviously, I want to go back to that tee shot right now. But it was a phenomenal day."

Spieth sure knows his way around Augusta National, where he won in 2015, finished second two other times, and now has a third-place showing on his résumé. His worst performance in five appearances was a tie for 11th last year.

Fowler couldn't resist a little jab at his

good friend.

"Solo second feels and sounds better than tied for second, so it was nice to edge out Jordan," Fowler said with a smile.

But Spieth already has three major titles on his résumé.

Fowler is still chasing the first.

He's certainly had plenty of opportunities, most notably finishing in the top five of all four majors in 2014. Fowler now has eight top-five finishes in 31 majors over his career.

This one felt different than all the others.

Fowler played like a champion on the final day. He went to the last hole with a real shot to win.

"I am ready to go win a major, but this was kind of the first major week that I understood that and knew that and felt that," he said. "I'm ready to go. I'm really looking forward to this year and the three majors that are left."

"It should be," he added confidently, "a very good major season."

Fowler will need to get off to a better start than he did in Augusta, where he was just 2 under through the first two rounds. He really turned it on over the weekend, surging into contention with a 65 on Saturday before making the best closing round of his Masters career.

He showed his mettle by battling through a tough start on Sunday — his first seven holes resulted in six pars and a bogey — but got things going with back-to-back birdies before making the turn.

Fowler added four more birdies on the back side, the best he's ever played with a major title hanging in the balance.

Someone asked Fowler about his goals going forward.

"My next goal?" he said. "Win a major. We're close. That's the No. 1 priority."

Scoreboard

Masters

Sunday
At Augusta National Golf Club
Augusta, Ga.
Purse \$11 million
Yardage: 7,435; Par 72

Final (a-amateur)	
P. Reed, \$1,080,000	69-66-67-71=273=15
R. Fowler, \$1,158,000	70-72-65-67=274=14
J. Spieth, \$748,000	66-74-71-64=275=13
Jon Rahm, \$528,000	75-68-65-69=277=11
Rory McIlroy, \$386,375	69-71-65-74=279=9
C. Smith, \$338,375	71-72-70-66=279=9
H. Stenson, \$386,375	69-70-70-70=279=9
Bubba Watson, \$386,375	69-68-69=279=9
M. Leishman, \$319,000	70-67-73=280=8
Tony Finau, \$286,000	68-74-73=281=7
J. Hahn, \$286,000	73-68-71=281=7
C. Hoffman, \$231,000	69-73-73=282=6
D. Grier, \$231,000	70-71-71=282=6
Justin Rose, \$231,000	72-70-71=282=6
Paul Casey, \$192,500	74-75=69=283=5
R. McIlroy, \$192,500	72-72-74=283=5
T. Fleetwood, \$170,500	72-72-66=284=4
J. Thomas, \$170,500	74-67=70=284=4
H. Matsuyama, \$154,000	71-72=69=285=3
Jason Day, \$129,150	75-71=69=285=3
F. Molinari, \$129,150	72-74-70=286=2
Webb Simpson, \$128,150	73-70=67=286=2
Jimmy Walker, \$128,150	73-71=71=286=2
Brandan Grace, \$93,775	73-73-74=287=1
Adam Hadwin, \$93,775	75-75=72=287=1
S. Woo Kim, \$93,775	75-73=68=287=1
D. Bledsoe, \$93,775	72-72=72=287=1
Kevin Kisner, \$76,450	72-75=69=288=E
S. Kodaira, \$76,450	71-74-71=288=E
Matt Kuchar, \$76,450	68-72=72=288=E
Ryan Moore, \$76,450	74-72-72=288=E
Daniel Berger, \$63,663	73-74-71=289=+1
HaoTong Li, \$63,663	69-76-72=289=+1
D. Appleton, \$63,663	72-72-72=289=+1
Tiger Woods, \$63,663	73-75=72=289=+1
Zach Johnson, \$55,275	70-74-72=290=+2
P. Mickelson, \$55,275	72-72-74=290=+2
R. Cabrera Bello, \$46,200	76-74=72=291=+3
Fred Couples, \$46,200	72-76-74=291=+3
B. DeChambeau, \$46,200	74-74=72=291=+3
M. Fitzpatrick, \$46,200	75-74=73=291=+3
B. Langer, \$46,200	74-74-71=291=+3
J. Vegas, \$46,200	69-72=73=291=+3
D. Appleton, \$35,200	75-74=73=292=+4
Brian Harman, \$35,200	74-73=69=292=+4
L. Patton, \$35,200	73-75=72=292=+4
Van Pelt, \$35,200	74-75=74=292=+4
Vijay Singh, \$32,600	71-74-79=295=+7
X. Schaefele, \$27,720	71-78=72=296=+8
W. Hoge, \$27,720	75-74=73=296=+8
Kyle Stanley, \$27,060	74-75=76=297=+9
Chez Reavis, \$26,400	76-71=75=298=+10

Laugh: Reed silences doubters with 1st major championship

FROM BACK PAGE

Known as "Captain America" for his play in the Ryder Cup, Reed added a far more important title: Masters champion. He did it by playing steady to protect a three-shot lead as some of the biggest names in golf tried to chase him down.

And if he wasn't exactly lacking for confidence before, winning the green jacket should give him even more of a strut.

"He's not scared. I think you guys have seen that previous from the Ryder Cups and the way he plays," said Fowler, who closed with a 67. "He won't back down. I don't necessarily see him as someone that backs up and will let you come back into the tournament. You have to go catch him."

Only Spieth managed to do that on a cool but sunny afternoon on an Augusta National course that was giving up birdies in bunches. Spieth, who started the day nine strokes down, briefly drew into a tie for the lead with a long birdie putt on No. 16, but Reed birdied No. 14 behind him to retake the lead and held on for the win.

Had Spieth pulled it off it would have been the greatest comeback in Masters history, but he bogeyed his final hole for a 64 that was one shot off the course record.

"I think I've proven to myself and to others that you never gave up," Spieth said. "I started the



DAVID J. PHILLIP/AP

Patrick Reed holds the championship trophy after winning the Masters golf tournament on Sunday, in Augusta, Ga.

round nine shots back and I came out with the idea of just playing the golf course and having a lot of fun doing it and try to shoot a low round and finish the tournament strong and see what happens, if something crazy happens."

The 27-year-old Texan also survived a late move by Fowler, whose final hole birdie forced

Reed to make par on No. 18 to win. He did just that, rolling a 25-foot putt down the scary slope on the final green, then calmly sinking the putt to win.

"I knew it was going to be a dogfight," Reed said. "It's just a way of God basically saying, 'Let's see if you have it.' Everyone knows you have it physically with

the talent. But do you have it mentally? Can you handle the ups and downs throughout the round?"

McIlroy, meanwhile, will have to wait another year for a shot at the career Grand Slam after his disappointing round.

Trailing by three shots to start the final round, he closed to within one shot after two holes. That was as close as he came. McIlroy's putter betrayed him — he missed four putts inside 10 feet on the front nine — and he was never a factor on the back nine. He closed with a 74 and tied for fifth.

"Tough day, but I'll be back," McIlroy said. "And hopefully, I'll be better."

Reed is old-school among his generation with a bash attitude and a willingness to speak his mind. He has never been terribly popular in this state, mainly because of allegations of bad behavior while playing for Georgia that led to an early departure from the Bulldogs. He transferred to Augusta State and led the outmanned Jaguars to a pair of NCAA titles.

His parents live in Augusta, but were not at the tournament. They weren't at his wedding in 2012, a relationship Reed chooses not to discuss.

"I'm just out here to play golf and try to win golf tournaments," Reed said.

Reed was both on Sunday on the biggest stage in golf.

SPORTS

GOLF

Last laugh

No one ignoring Reed after breakthrough Masters win

By TIM DAHLBERG
Associated Press

AUGUSTA, Ga.

Patrick Reed got some laughs a few years back when he declared himself a top five player, with little on his resumé to back it up.

No one is laughing now.

Reed's breakthrough win in the Masters didn't officially move him into the top five — he's now No. 11 in the world — but it certainly moved him into the conversation when the debate turns to major championships.

As well it should, after Reed handled not only the golf course but the suffocating pressure of a Sunday at the Masters to win his first major. Playing in the same group as four-time major winner Rory McIlroy, he didn't flinch even as Jordan Spieth and Rickie Fowler made late runs at him.

The player known for a sometimes prickly attitude may have even won a few fans over in the process.

'I'm just out here to play golf and try to win golf tournaments.'

Patrick Reed
Masters champion

They cheered for McIlroy on the first tee, certain that he was going to overcome a three-shot deficit and win his first green jacket. But it was Reed who got the final cheers when he calmly sank a 3-footer on the 18th green for a final round 71 to win by a shot over Fowler and two over Spieth.

"I walked up to the first tee and had a really welcoming cheer from the fans, but then when Rory walked up to the tee, you know, his cheer was a little louder," Reed said. "But that's another thing that just kind of played into my hand. Not only did it fuel my fire a little bit, but also, it just takes the pressure off of me and adds it back to him."

SEE LAUGH ON PAGE 31

Inside:

■ Spieth, Fowler make sure Reed had to work for first major title, Page 31

■ McIlroy's short game falls flat at crucial juncture, Page 30

■ Tiger shoots 3-under 69 on Sunday, Page 30



Jordan Spieth



Once in a lifetime

Ohtani continues brilliant start, flirts with perfect game » Page 26

Patrick Reed celebrates after winning the Masters on Sunday in Augusta, Ga.

PHOTOS BY CHRIS CARLSON/AP



Busch picks up first victory of year for JGR » Page 25

